PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

SIXTH SERIES—VOLUME 437 (Part 2)

HOUSE OF COMMONS

OFFICIAL REPORT

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND NORTHERN IRELAND
FIFTY-FOURTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

SESSION 2005–06

COMPRISING PERIOD
10 October—21 October 2005

Comm Ref
C10/06

CAMBRIDGESHIRE
LIBRARIES

HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

(FORMED BY THE RT. HON. TONY BLAIR, MP, MAY 2005)

PRIME MINISTER, FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY AND MINISTER FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE—The Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, MP
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. John Prescott, MP
CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER—The Rt. Hon. Gordon Brown, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS—The Rt. Hon. Jack Straw, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WORK AND PENSIONS—The Rt. Hon. David Blunkett, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS—The Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND—The Rt. Hon. Alistair Darling, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE—The Rt. Hon. John Reid, MP
LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS AND LORD PRIVY SEAL—The Rt. Hon. Geoffrey Hoon, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR HEALTH—The Rt. Hon. Patricia Hewitt, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT—The Rt. Hon. Tessa Jowell, MP
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY—The Rt. Hon. Hilary Armstrong, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT—The Rt. Hon. Charles Clarke, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WALES—The Rt. Hon. Peter Hain, MP
MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO—The Rt. Hon. Ian McCartney, MP
LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS AND PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL—The Rt. Hon.The Baroness Amos
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS AND LORD CHANCELLOR—The Rt. Hon.The Lord Falconer of Thoroton, QC
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT—The Rt. Hon. Hilary Benn, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY—The Rt. Hon. Alan Johnson, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS—The Rt. Hon. Ruth Kelly, MP
MINISTER OF COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT—The Rt. Hon. David Miliband, MP
CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER—The Rt. Hon. John Hutton, MP
CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY—The Rt. Hon. Des Browne, MP

DEPARTMENTS OF STATE AND MINISTERS

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister—
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. John Prescott, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister of Communities and Local Government—The Rt. Hon. David Miliband, MP
Minister for Local Government—Phil Woolas, Esq, MP
Minister for Housing and Planning—Yvette Cooper, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Jim Fitzpatrick, MP
Baroness Andrews, OBE

Cabinet Office—
CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER—The Rt. Hon. John Hutton, MP
MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO—The Rt. Hon. Ian McCartney, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—
Jim Murphy, Esq, MP

Constitutional Affairs—
SECRETARY OF STATE —The Rt. Hon.The Lord Falconer of Thoroton, QC
MINISTER OF STATE—
The Rt. Hon. Harriet Harman, QC, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Baroness Ashton of Upholland
Bridget Prentice, MP

Culture, Media and Sport—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT AND MINISTER FOR WOMEN—The Rt. Hon. Tessa Jowell, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—
Minister for Sport and Tourism—The Rt. Hon. Richard Caborn, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
David Lammy, Esq, MP
James Purnell, MP

Defence—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. John Reid, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—
The Rt. Hon. Adam Ingram, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Don Touhig, Esq, MP
The Lord Drayson

Education and Skills—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Ruth Kelly, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Schools—The Rt. Hon. Jacqui Smith, MP
Minister for Higher Education and Lifelong Learning—Bill Rammell, MP
Minister for Children and Families—The Rt. Hon. Beverley Hughes, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Maria Eagle, MP
Phil Hope, MP
The Lord Adonis

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—
Minister for Climate Change and the Environment—Elliot Morley, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Ben Bradshaw, Esq, MP
The Lord Bach
Jim Knight, MP

Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Jack Straw, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for the Middle East—Dr. Kim Howells, MP
Minister for Europe—The Rt. Hon. Douglas Alexander, MP
Minister for Trade —Ian Pearson, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—
The Lord Triesman

Health—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Patricia Hewitt, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Rosie Winterton, MP
The Rt. Hon. Jane Kennedy, MP
The Lord Warner
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Caroline Flint, MP
Liam Byrne, Esq, MP

Home Office—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Charles Clarke, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Policing, Security and Community Safety—The Rt. Hon. Hazel Blears, MP
Minister for Criminal Justice and Offender Management—The Rt. Hon. Baroness Scotland of Asthal, QC
Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality— Tony McNulty, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Paul Goggins, MP
Fiona Mactaggart, MP
Andy Burnham, MP

International Development—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Hilary Benn, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—Gareth Thomas, Esq, MP

Law Officers' Department—
ATTORNEY-GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Lord Goldsmith, QC
SOLICITOR-GENERAL—Mike O'Brien, QC, MP
ADVOCATE-GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND—The Baroness Clark, QC

Leader of the House of Commons—
LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS AND LORD PRIVY SEAL—The Rt. Hon. Geoffrey Hoon, MP
DEPUTY LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—Nigel Griffiths, MP

Northern Ireland Office—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Peter Hain, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
The Rt. Hon. Lord Rooker
David Hanson, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—
Angela E. Smith, MP
Shaun Woodward, Esq, MP

Paymaster General's Office—
PAYMASTER GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Dawn Primarolo, MP

Privy Council Office—
LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS— The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Amos

Scotland Office—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Alistair Darling, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
David Cairns, MP

Trade and Industry—
SECRETARY OF STATE —The Rt. Hon. Alan Johnson, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Industry and the Regions —The Rt. Hon. Alun Michael, MP
Minister for Energy—Malcolm Wicks, MP
Minister for Trade—Ian Pearson, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Lord Sainsbury of Turville (Minister for Science and Innovation)
Gerry Sutcliffe, Esq, MP (Minister for Employment Relations, Consumers and Fair Markets)
Barry Gardiner, MP (Minister for Competitiveness)
Meg Munn, MP (Minister for Women and Equality)

Transport—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Alistair Darling, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—
Dr. Stephen Ladyman, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Derek Twigg, MP
Karen Buck, MP

Treasury—
PRIME MINISTER, FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY AND MINISTER FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE - The Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, MP
CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER—The Rt. Hon. Gordon Brown, MP
CHIEF SECRETARY—The Rt. Hon. Des Browne, MP
PAYMASTER GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Dawn Primarolo, MP
FINANCIAL SECRETARY—John Healey, MP
ECONOMIC SECRETARY—Ivan Lewis, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY—The Rt. Hon. Hilary Armstrong, MP
LORDS COMMISSIONERS—
Joan Ryan, MP
Gillian Merron, MP
Vernon Coaker, Esq, MP
Tom Watson, Esq, MP
David Watts, Esq, MP
ASSISTANT WHIPS—
Frank Roy, Esq, MP
Ian Cawsey, Esq, MP
Alan Campbell, Esq, MP
Claire Ward, MP
Parmjit Dhanda, MP
Tony Cunningham, Esq, MP
Kevin Brennan, Esq, MP.

Wales Office—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Peter Hain, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—
Nick Ainger, MP

Work and Pensions—

SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. David Blunkett, MP

MINISTERS OF STATE—

Minister for Employment and Welfare Reform—The Rt. Hon. Margaret Hodge, MP

Minister for Pensions Reform—Stephen Timms, Esq, MP

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—

The Lord Hunt of Kingsheath, OBE

Anne McGuire, MP

James Plaskitt, Esq, MP

Her Majesty's Household—

LORD CHAMBERLAIN—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Luce, GCVO, DL

LORD STEWARD—The Duke of Abercorn, KG

MASTER OF THE HORSE—The Lord Vestey

TREASURER—The Rt. Hon. Bob Ainsworth, MP

COMPTROLLER—The Rt. Hon. Thomas McAvoy, MP

VICE-CHAMBERLAIN—John Heppell, Esq, MP

CAPTAIN OF THE HONOURABLE CORPS OF GENTLEMEN-AT-ARMS—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Grocott

CAPTAIN OF THE QUEEN'S BODYGUARD OF THE YEOMAN OF THE GUARD—The Lord Davies of Oldham

LORDS IN WAITING—The Lord Bassam of Brighton, The Lord Evans of Temple Guiting CBE, The Lord McKenzie

BARONESSES IN WAITING—The Baroness Farrington of Ribbleton, The Baroness Crawley, The Baroness Royall of Blaisdon

---

SECOND CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSIONER, REPRESENTING CHURCH COMMISSIONERS— Sir Stuart Bell, MP

HOUSE OF COMMONS

THE SPEAKER—The Rt. Hon. Michael J. Martin, MP

CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS—The Rt. Hon. Sir Alan Haselhurst, MP

FIRST DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS—Mrs. Sylvia Heal, MP

SECOND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS—Sir Michael Lord, MP

CHAIRMEN'S PANEL—
David Amess, Janet Anderson, Hugh Bayley, Miss Anne Begg, Joe Benton, John Bercow, Sir John Butterfill, Martin Caton, Christopher Chope, Derek Conway, Frank Cook, John Cummings, Mrs. Janet Dean, The Rt. Hon. Eric Forth, Roger Gale, Mike Hancock, Jimmy Hood, Mrs. Joan Humble, Eric Illsley, Martyn Jones, David Marshall, Eric Martlew, Edward O'Hara, Bill Olner, Greg Pope, David Taylor, The Rt. Hon. Ann Widdecombe, David Wilshire, Ann Winterton, Sir Nicholas Winterton

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION—
The Rt. Hon. The Speaker (Chairman), The Rt. Hon. Geoffrey Hoon, MP, Chris Grayling, MP, Sir Stuart Bell, MP, Sir Patrick Cormack, MP, FSA, Nick Harvey, MP

SECRETARY OF THE COMMISSION—David Natzler

ASSISTANT SECRETARY —Geoffrey Farrar

ADMINISTRATION ESTIMATE AUDIT COMMITTEE—
Chris Grayling, MP (Chairman), Nick Harvey, MP, Sir Thomas Legg, KCB, QC, David Taylor, FCA

SECRETARY OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE—Tracey Garratty

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT—
Roger Sands, (Chief Executive), Helen Irwin (Clerk of Committees, Department of the Clerk of the House), Peter Grant Peterkin, CB, OBE (Serjeant at Arms), John Pullinger (Librarian), Andrew Walker (Director of Finance and Administration), Lorraine Sutherland (Editor of the Official Report), Sue Harrison (Director of Catering Services), Joan Miller (Director of Parliamentary ICT)

SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT—Robert Twigger

SPEAKER'S SECRETARY—Angus Sinclair

SPEAKER'S COUNSEL—John Vaux

SPEAKER'S CHAPLAIN—Rev. Canon Robert Wright

MEDICAL ADVISER TO THE SPEAKER—Dr. Ron Zeegen, OBE, FRCP, MRCS, DObst, RCOG

PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS—Sir Philip Mawer

PARLIAMENTARY SECURITY CO-ORDINATOR—Peter Mason

10 October 2005

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 10 October 2005

TREASURY

Ecofin: 11 October 2005

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Gordon Brown): I will chair the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN) on 11 October 2005. The Paymaster General, the right hon. Dawn Primarolo MP, will represent the UK. Items on the agenda are as follows:

Implementation of the stability and growth pact; the Commission will update the Councilon Hungary's excessive deficit procedure.

Competition policy: sectoral inquiries; Commissioner Kroes will present the latestprogress financial services.

Financial services: Post-FSAP; ECOFIN will agree conclusions on the Commission'sGreen Paper on Financial Services Policy (2005–2010).

Progress and opportunities for better regulation, where the chairs of the three Lamfalussycommittees of experts will report to ECOFIN for the first time, including on their role inpromoting better regulation and making supervision in the financial services industry moreproportionate and effective.

EU-US Economic relationship, where ECOFIN will consider a joint paper from the UK,Austrian and Finnish presidencies, which identifies the potential benefits of closertransatlantic economic cooperation.

Economic regeneration of the West Bank and Gaza Region, where CommissionerAlkenius and EIB President Maystadt will give an oral report on progress in projects tosupport regeneration in the West Bank and Gaza.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Conditional Fee Agreements

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Bridget Prentice): My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs has made the following written ministerial statement.

On 10 August 2005 I published the Department's response to the consultation paper *Making Simple CFAs a Reality* published on 29 June 2004.

The paper *New Regulation for CFAs—A summary of responses to the consultation paper Making Simple CFAs a Reality, DCA's conclusions and new regulations* sets out the Department's conclusions on the simplification of the CFAs and related secondary legislation. The paper includes drafts of the regulations, which revoke the current secondary legislation governing CFAs, collective conditional fee agreement regulations (CCFA) and new set of simplified membership organisation regulations. These regulations will be laid before Parliament separately.

The current CFA regulations are unnecessarily complex and opaque and duplicate regulation already performed by the Law Society. Removing unnecessary regulation will apply to all CFAs which are used across a range of civil cases and will put into place the Government's commitment to introduce better regulation and strip out unnecessary legislation.

The existing CFA and CCFA regulations will be revoked and the new simplified Membership Organisation regulations introduced from 1 November 2005.

The primary legislation (section 27 of the access to Justice Act 1999) will provide the minimum government legislative framework needed for the use of CFAs by legal representatives.

Primary responsibility for client care will be focused on solicitors through Law Society's regulation.

DCA has been working closely with the Law Society on improvements to its guidance and rules and the Law Society plans to amend its rules and publish new CFA model agreements to coincide with the changes to regulations.

Copies of the paper have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses. It is also available on the Department for Constitutional Affairs' web-site www.dca.gov.uk/.

Civil and Family Court Fees

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Bridget Prentice): My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State has made the following written ministerial statement in the other place today.

"The Department for Constitutional Affairs has published a consultation paper, which sets outproposals for increases to certain civil and family court fees. The purpose of the consultationis to—

(1) identify whether the package of proposed increases is the most apt to raise fee income and to cover costs; and

(2) seek views on whether a particular increase in an individual fee might have specific untoward consequences.

Copies of the consultation paper have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and canalso be obtained free on the Department's website at the following web address—

http://www.dca.gov.uk/consult/civilfees/civilfees.htm

The closing date for consultation is 18 November."

Murder and Manslaughter Victims

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): On 1 September we published a consultation paper: "Hearing the Relatives of Murder and Manslaughter Victims".

The Government believe that while all criminal justice agencies are making progress, for example through the "No Witness, No Justice" programme, more needs to be done to inform and engage victims and their families.

Our consultation paper outlines proposals for piloting ways of providing such assistance to bereaved relatives of homicide victims by:

(a) providing advice and support to relatives during the trial, and;

(b) helping bereaved relatives make an oral statement to the court after

conviction but before sentencing about the effect of the crime on them.

The Government intend that the pilot should address a broad range of options for delivering these functions, offering the maximum possible choice to the bereaved. The choices should include an independent advocate, for either or both functions.

This initiative is part of a larger package of measures to support the victims of crime, which will be announced as they become ready.

Copies of the consultation paper have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Solicitors (Compensation for Inadequate Professional Services)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Bridget Prentice): The Government have today laid before Parliament the following instrument: Solicitors (Compensation for Inadequate Professional Services) Order 2005.

The Order, made under paragraph 3(2) of Schedule 1A to the Solicitors Act 1974, will raise the maximum limit on the compensation which the Law Society's Council may direct a solicitor to pay on a complaint of inadequate professional service. The limit is raised from £5,000 to £15,000 with effect from 1 January 2006.

From 1 January, consumers seeking compensation for inadequate professional service will be able to benefit from the increased compensation level which the Law Society can order and avoid the necessity of automatically having to take court action in order to claim redress in those cases.

The revised limit will apply to those cases where a complaint of inadequate professional service is made to the Law Society by the complainant after 1 January 2006.

My Department and the Law Society are in agreement that raising the compensation level would be in the interest of, and welcomed by, the consumer.

At present, if the compensation claimed is greater than £5,000 the Law Society cannot deal with it. This means that a complainant frequently has to retain the services of a further solicitor in order to get redress from the solicitor who generated the original complaint. This can be a lengthy and expensive process for a consumer. Raising the limit will enable a far greater proportion of complainants to obtain adequate redress without the need to resort to court proceedings.

A copy of the Order to raise the compensation limit has been placed in the Vote Office and Printed Paper Office.

Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State has made the following written ministerial statement in the other place today.

"Today I have deposited copies of "The Freedom of Information Act 2000—Statistics onImplementation in Central Government April June 2005" in the Libraries of both Houses.

This is the second quarterly bulletin produced by DCA monitoring the performance of centralGovernment and associated bodies under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. It shows thatthe performance of Government in meeting the statutory time limits for replying to requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 has improved significantly sincethe first quarter."

DEFENCE

University Air Squadrons Study

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Don Touhig): A Royal Air Force study has been conducted to determine the appropriate size, shape and disposition of the university air squadrons. The study was commissioned against the background of proposed changes to the future size of the RAF, and of the planned tri-service military flying training system in partnership with industry. The results of the study have been carefully considered and I have decided that university air squadron students will no longer undertake elementary flying training while at university, and that elementary flying training will take place on a standard basis for all pilots, after initial officer training.

There are 14 university air squadrons located at 12 airfields across the UK, with a total undergraduate membership of some 1,000. Presently, the main university air squadron roles are to attract high calibre graduates into the RAF and to deliver the RAF's elementary flying training task. Elementary flying training is the first stage of RAF pilot training and is currently undertaken by all pilot university air squadron members during the course of their degrees and by direct entrant RAF pilots over a six-month period following initial officer training.

The study concluded that university air squadrons should continue to play an important role in engaging university students in RAF experience, but their focus should subtly shift to put more effort into leadership and personnel development training, nurturing recruitment to all branches. Flying will be available to all university air squadron members on a voluntary basis, but undergraduates will no longer be required to undertake formal elementary flying training during their university period. Up to 10 hours a year of structured light aircraft flying will still be available to all university air squadron undergraduates, including those in ground branches. In future, ex-university air squadron graduates joining the RAF as pilots will now undertake elementary flying training alongside other direct entrant pilots.

Overall, the changes will increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the flying training pipeline and, for the university air squadron undergraduates, lessen the conflicting pressures to achieve a good degree and the highest standard during elementary flying training. They will create a fairer system, and resolve the inherent inefficiencies caused by undergraduates' elementary flying training being spread over such a long period. University air squadrons will now be able to concentrate on the recruitment and personal development of all potential officers regardless of branch preference.

With effect from autumn, the following airfields will no longer be used for elementary flying training and overall flying hours are expected to reduce: RAF Benson, RAF Cosford, RAF Leuchars, RAF Colerne, RAF Leeming, Glasgow Airport, Boscombe Down, RAF Woodvale and RAF St Athan. RAF Cranwell will see a slight reduction in flying due to a reduced requirement to train instructors, whilst RAF Wyton and RAF Church Fenton will see some increase due to the establishment of new training squadrons to meet the elementary flying training task.

Light aircraft flying for university air squadron members will, however, continue and in some cases, particularly for those in ground branches, be enhanced. If implemented in full, these changes will result in a reduction of 21 RAF posts, but I do not envisage any other significant job implications.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Ministerial Planning Decisions (Olympics)

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Yvette Cooper): Because of the wider role that the Deputy Prime Minister may take in relation to the delivery of the 2012 London Olympics, and in order to ensure that the advice set out in the "Guidance on Propriety Issues in the Handling of Planning Decisions in ODPM" is followed, it has been decided that any planning decisions which fall to Ministers to take in respect of Olympics related developments will be taken by Baroness Andrews, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State ODPM.

Lyons Inquiry and Council Tax Revaluation

The Minister of Communities and Local Government (Mr. David Miliband): The Government announced on 20 September 2005 an extension of the scope and length of Sir Michael Lyons' independent inquiry into local government funding so that he can consider issues relating to the wider functions of local government and its future role.

Sir Michael Lyons has discussed with Ministers his work so far and his initial conclusion is that well founded recommendations on possible reforms to the funding of local government cannot sensibly be made in isolation from proper consideration and understanding—not only by Government but by the population at large—of the developing role and functions of local government. He has made clear that any proposals for reform of the funding system raise complex issues, and the Government have agreed that they need to be set firmly and explicitly within the wider context of a clear, shared understanding of the role of local government, and of councils' accountability to service users, residents, and taxpayers. My right hon. Friends the Deputy Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer have therefore extended the terms of reference of Sir Michael's inquiry so that he can consider issues relating to the functions of local government and its future role, as well as, and prior to, making recommendations on local government funding. His work will inform the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007.

Sir Michael will issue a series of discussion documents and produce his final report at the end of 2006. To set the scene for this work, Sir Michael will in Autumn 2005 set out his preliminary thinking and publish research and analysis undertaken so far, drawing out the relationship of local government function to finance.

The Government have also announced that they intend to introduce legislation to postpone the revaluation of council tax in England. The case for council tax revaluation—that it is right to maintain a fair alignment between house prices and council tax bands—is linked to wider questions about the structure of the council tax, and to the operation of council tax benefit. It is also relevant that there are a number of other imminent changes in the local government finance system, including the move to three year budgets, the review of the local government finance formula, and the creation of a dedicated schools budget. We have reached the view, therefore, that to proceed with the current timetable for council tax revaluation in England would not be sensible. We propose to legislate to substitute for the current revaluation date of 2007 a power to set a date for revaluation by secondary legislation. This will provide for revaluation to take place in such a way as to take full account of Sir Michael Lyons' work on the functions of local government as well as its financing. The Government do not believe that revaluation will occur during this Parliament. I regret that the Government could not make this announcement while Parliament was sitting. However, having reached the decision to postpone revaluation, it was necessary to announce it immediately so that the preparatory work could be stood down and costs kept to a minimum. A copy of the press notice issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, which announces the Government's decision, and which includes the extended terms of reference for Sir Michael Lyons' inquiry, has been placed in the House Library.

The future of local government is critical to the future of the country, and the Government are determined to ensure that a sustainable and secure funding base supports the changing and challenging role for local government now being developed.

Housing Act 2004

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Yvette Cooper): The Government are today publishing the detailed programme for commencement of parts 1–4, 6 and 7 of the Housing Act 2004. Appendix 1 sets out a phased introduction of the provisions from November this year leading to a common commencement date of 6 April 2006 for all these provisions except for certain enforcement measures and the new tenancy deposit arrangements, which will follow later in 2006.

The Government have previously announced a provisional timetable for introducing these provisions as from late autumn 2005. We are now in a position to confirm the full timetable, starting with the laying of the HHSRS regulations next month and completing tenant deposit protection in October 2006. This will maintain the momentum established with local authorities and landlord bodies over recent months to equip each to carry out their responsibilities effectively and at least cost to local taxpayers and tenants as from the due commencement date.

By announcing this timetable, we are able to give certainty as to when the new provisions will be coming into force and enable all sides to prepare fully. The Government will continue to work with local authorities and landlords through the IDeA to complete the current training programme and to extend the extensive local authority/landlord series of discussions that have proved so successful locally in getting the two sides to agree the basis on which applications are to be handled and funded.

Making the secondary legislation available early in draft form, alongside guidance, and then laying the instruments in good time will do a great deal to inform discussions and ensure a wider understanding of the details and operation of the new system than would have been the case with an earlier commencement date.

ODPM is to appoint a contractor who will undertake work with local authorities to establish a baseline as from later this year and to monitor and measure the impact of the new licensing regime on the private rented sector. Officials will write to local authorities when an appointment has been made and provide details of when the main fieldwork periods will be.

Bellwin Scheme (North Yorkshire, Ryedale and Hambleton Councils)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Jim Fitzpatrick): Large areas of North Yorkshire experienced exceptional storm and flood damage on 19 June 2005. Given these circumstances I am satisfied that financial assistance under the Bellwin scheme is justified. A scheme will therefore be established under section 155 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Grants will be paid to the authorities to cover 85 per cent. of the eligible costs above a threshold, which they have incurred in dealing with the storm and flood damage.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Council of Europe's Third Summit and Follow-up Activity

The Minister for Europe (Mr. Douglas Alexander): I have arranged for copies of the Council of Europe's Third Summit declaration and action plan to be placed in the Library of the House.

My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister represented the United Kingdom at the summit held in Warsaw on 16–17 May 2005.

At the summit, heads of state and Government adopted a declaration and action plan focusing the future work of the Council of Europe on its core areas of promoting and protecting human rights, rule of law and pluralist democracy.

A Council of Europe Committee has been set up in Strasbourg to supervise follow-up action to the declaration and implementation of the action plan.

EU Committee of the Regions (UK Members)

The Minister for Europe (Mr. Douglas Alexander): The Government have decided to nominate four replacement UK members of the EU Committee of the Regions, to fill vacancies which had arisen in the UK delegation. The new members are: Councillor Sharon Taylor (East of England Regional Assembly); Councillor Dave Quayle (North West Regional Assembly); Councillor WJ Williams (Isle of Anglesey County Council); and Councillor David Parsons (Leicestershire County Council and East Midlands Regional Assembly). In accordance with the established procedure, all the nominations have been approved by the Council.

The Government made the nominations following the usual consultation process with local and regional government. It has paid particular attention to maintaining the appropriate regional, political, gender and ethnic balance of the UK delegation. This balance is not affected by the nominations.

The Committee of the Regions was established by the Maastricht Treaty, as a consultative body with limited powers to give non-binding opinions on EU draft legislation. The UK delegation comprises 24 full members and 24 alternates.

2005 UN World Summit

The Minister for the Middle East (Dr. Kim Howells): The 2005 UN world summit took place in New York from 14–16 September. My right hon. Friends the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for International Development and the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs attended for the Government. At the initiative of the UK and other UN member states, the summit included a session devoted to financing for developments.

Overall, the summit delivered a worthwhile package of reforms and commitments. The full text of the outcome document is available at www.un.org/summit2005. Negotiations on the document were at times difficult, reflecting the ambitious agenda and divergence of views between UN member states on several issues. As EU presidency, the UK played an important role in these negotiations. Follow-up work is now underway in several areas to implement the agreements reached.

The reforms agreed included:

- Agreement on the responsibility to protect, acknowledging that the international community should act if states fail to protect their populations from the worst atrocities: genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing or crimes against humanity;
- Good language on development and climate change, with several important Gleneaglesoutcomes endorsed and new EU commitments welcomed by the broader UN membership.These include the need to accelerate progress towards the millennium development goals andto address the special needs of Africa;
- Agreement to create by the end of this year a new peace-building commission, to close an institutional gap in the UN's conflict architecture and assist countries emerge from conflict;
- Agreement to establish a new human rights council, to replace the much-maligned Commission for Human Rights;
- Endorsement of further work to strengthen UN effectiveness in operational activities for tackling humanitarian crises and to ensure more coherent international institutional arrangements for environmental action;
- Endorsement of UN secretariat reforms underway and a mandate to the Secretary-General to make proposals for further reforms in such areas as ethics, accountability/ oversight, and financial and human resource management; and
- Unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestation and, separately, unanimous adoption by the Security Council of the UK's Security Council resolution to prohibit by law incitement of terrorism.

In some areas the outcome text did not meet our aspirations. Stronger language on terrorism, stating that the targeted killing of civilians is never justified and constitutes an act of terrorism, proved out of reach.

Efforts to secure strong language on non-proliferation and disarmament (following disappointment at the non-proliferation treaty review conference) were unsuccessful. The EU pushed for more extensive reforms of the UN secretariat. Furthermore, opposition from some countries prevented more detailed modalities being agreed for the new human rights council.

Some have criticised the summit's outcome document as modest. However, as the Prime Minister said in his speech at the summit, "if we did what we have agreed on doubling aid, on opening up trade, on debt relief, on HIV/AIDS and malaria, on conflict prevention so that never again would the world stand by, helpless when genocide struck, our modesty would surprise. There would be more democracy, less oppression. More freedom, less terrorism. More growth, less poverty."

The Government are committed to the full and early implementation of the reforms. We will continue to work towards achieving reforms where we wanted to see greater progress.

HEALTH

Health Committee's Fifth Report of Session 2004–05

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Jane Kennedy): The Government's response to the Health Committee's fifth report of session 2004–05 on the use of new medical technologies within the NHS, Cm 6656, has been published today. Copies have been placed in the Library.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Control Order Powers (11 June 2005–10 September 2005)

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Clarke): Section 14(1) of the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 (the 2005 Act) requires me to report to Parliament as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of every relevant three-month period on my exercise of the control order powers during that period.

The 2005 Act came into force on 11 March 2005. The second three month period ended on 10 September. During the period 11 June to 10 September, I made an order with the permission of the court under section 3(1) *(a)* of the 2005 Act on 5 September 2005 in respect of a British national.

I have revoked nine of the orders which I made in the previous quarter against individuak who were formerly certified under section 21(1) of the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001.

There are therefore three control orders currently in force.

I have refused three requests to modify the obligations in the control orders which I have made. A right of appeal exists in section 10 of the 2005 Act against a decision by the Secretary of State not to modify an obligation contained in a control order. None of those subject to a control order has exercised this right in respect of the refusals mentioned above.

TRANSPORT

Financial Protection for Air Travellers

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Ms Karen Buck): The Government have decided not to implement the Civil Aviation Authority's recommendation for a £1 levy on all air passengers departing the UK.

The Government wish to thank the CAA for the enormous effort it has put into its analysis. But the attractions of the CAA scheme are outweighed by the disadvantages.

First, the levy would be compulsory. The Government do not believe that it should compel citizens to protect themselves against the failure of an airline. The Government do not require citizens to take out medical insurance or an E111, although it is wise to do so. We do not require people to insure their house contents, although most people choose to do so. Even in car insurance, the legal requirement is limited to third party liabilities.

Secondly, there is no logical reason why the State should organise refunds for this one group of consumers. The Government do not have schemes to refund those who order furniture from a store which goes bankrupt, or lose money to cowboy workmen, or make unfortunate stock-market investments.

That is why, on balance, we do not think it right to extend ATOL beyond the requirements of European law although we do wish to reduce its bureaucracy.

ATOL stems from the early 1970s when a family holiday abroad tended to be organised as a package and travel abroad was infrequent. It involved putting at risk a significant proportion of family income in advance of the holiday being taken. These days overseas travel is a lot more routine. UK residents made a record 41 million holiday trips abroad in 2003 compared with fewer than 7 million in 1971.

Next, the levy would reduce but not eliminate the difference in protection given to package and independent travellers. There would still be a 2-tier system, as people who assemble their own packages would have cover for their flight but not for loss of accommodation or car hire.

The Government appreciate that the Package Travel Regulations impose costs on tour operators which they see as an unfair competitive advantage for scheduled airlines. But the levy would replace this imbalance with another. The same £1 would purchase cover for the traveller who buys a low-cost flight to Europe for under £30 and for the traveller (perhaps the more affluent person) who books a 2-week package in the Far East or the Caribbean. The budget traveller pays a much higher percentage of his outlay to ensure there is enough money in the pot to refund to the long-haul package passenger should his tour operator fail.

The Government wish to respond to the two arguments it has heard why airline passengers should be given special protection compared to other consumers in the economy.

First, some travellers think they are protected when they are not, especially as the distinction between a package and independent travel is not always clear. The Government has committed itself to reduce regulatory

burdens on business and only regulate where necessary in a light touch manner . A levy is a heavy-handed instrument to solve the problem of informing a population which has easy access to a multitude of information sources. Travellers are showing increasing sophistication in shopping around on the internet; and 170,000 households now have a holiday home abroad, about double over 10 years. Travel-in Europe has become particularly familiar since we have been part of the European community—whether for school trips, sports events, weekends, holidays or business.

The Government have already been working with the CAA and the airline industry to improve consumer information about insurance cover when booking flights. UK airlines have helped us develop a basic message for passengers making online bookings, and some have told us of plans to offer specific insurance as well as posting a message.

This is in addition to the information that is already available from the Air Transport Users Council, the CAA and other sources including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The FCO is going to update its website shortly to explain the protection available under the Consumer Credit Act 1974 if flight tickets are paid for by credit card. And some tour operators "sell" the protective benefits of a package more vigorously than others.

The second reason why air passengers are said to need special protection is that they may become stranded abroad in large numbers. The Government realise that not all travel insurance covers insolvency, but some does. The CAA's assessment and the example of EUjet this summer show that people will generally find their way home by other routes. Of course, they may incur some expense and inconvenience, particularly if they are not insured, but it is not fair to impose a levy on all air passengers just to provide cover for this. In the case of EUjet other, low-cost airlines stepped in to help and have told the Government they intend to learn lessons from the experience to improve the effectiveness of future voluntary rescue efforts. Similarly, when Swissair arid Sabena failed, other full-service airlines honoured the homeward tickets of passengers abroad.

The Government have been encouraged by the willingness expressed by airlines to put in place improvements to ensure travellers are able to make informed decisions about the need for insurance, and by airlines1 assurances that they would continue to take voluntary action on repatriation. The Government will be talking further to airlines in the coming weeks to ensure that effective voluntary measures are put in place as quickly as possible.

Nevertheless we recognise that the current bonding system for tour operators can be a barrier to market entry and tie up capital. The Government are therefore asking the CAA to review whether the system of ATOL bonds could be replaced with a less burdensome means of meeting tour operators' obligations to package holiday-makers under the Package Travel Directive, while at the same time replenishing the Air Travel Trust Fund following the passage of the Civil Aviation Bill.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate Report on Allerdale Borough Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) inspection report on Allerdale borough council was published on 22 September 2005 and is available in the Library.

In 2003–04, Allerdale borough council administered some £22 million in housing benefits, about 36 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure. Overall, the inspection found that Allerdale borough council was performing to a good standard. However, the report raises concerns about significant areas of weakness in claims administration, overpayments and resource management.

Allerdale borough council took 46 days to process new claims for housing benefits in 2004–05 against the DWP standard of 36 days. Inefficient practices were creating unnecessary delays at each stage of the claims process and the council was failing to ensure that the evidence provided by its customers met the requirements of the verification framework. The percentage of claims decided within 14 days of receiving all information and the time taken to process changes of circumstances had both deteriorated during 2004–05.

There had been a significant increase in the volume of overpayments identified, and a decline in overpayment recovery performance. BFI concluded that a lack of strategic direction and accountability, inconsistent practices and inadequate levels of assurance had led to major failings within overpayments.

An anti-fraud policy and strategy document supported by a business plan and realistic operational targets had been set for the Fraud Investigation Unit. An analysis of selected fraud files showed that the standard of investigation work was good in most cases.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is considering the report and may ask the council for proposals in response to BFI's findings.

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate Report on Bridgnorth District Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) inspection report on Bridgnorth district council was published on 22 September 2005 and is available in the Library.

In 2004–05, Bridgnorth district council administered some £8.3 million in housing benefits, about 31 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure. The council was one of nine councils inspected by BFI as part of its examination of local authorities' response to the security against fraud and error (SAFE) scheme.

Bridgnorth district council had a strong anti-fraud culture and gave a high priority to combating benefit fraud. The council had a history of prosecuting fraudsters even before the introduction of financial incentives through the SAFE scheme.

Benefit assessment staff generated a high number of fraud referrals and there were a number of good practices within the fraud team, such as well-structured interviews under caution. Although there were no written procedures covering counter-fraud work and limited management checking, the fraud team was well motivated and had achieved a high output of sanctions and prosecutions, particularly in relation to the caseload. This was very impressive in comparison with other similar sized local authorities. There were some weaknesses in earlier fraud investigations but BFI was satisfied that these had since been addressed. BFI was also satisfied that payments under the SAFE scheme had been properly claimed.

Some improvement was needed in the way that fraud files were maintained and in the recording of decisions on sanctions. The council also needs to do more to recover administrative penalties and publicise successful prosecutions.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is considering the report and may ask the council for proposals in response to BFI's findings.

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate Report on Broxtowe Borough Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) inspection report on Broxtowe borough council was published on 22 September 2005 and is available in the Library.

In 2004–05, Broxtowe borough council administered some £17 million in housing benefits, about 44 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure. In April 2005, BFI carried out an inspection on the council's housing benefit and council tax benefit administration and counter-fraud arrangements.

Inspectors found there was a great deal of commitment and professionalism in the council's efforts to administer HB and CTB and counter-fraud work, together with a determination to improve on good performance achieved.

By processing new claims quickly and accurately, the quality of service provided to the council's customers and key stakeholders was of a high standard. The council ensured delays and errors in the assessment of new claims were minimised by making good use of management information to monitor the amount of work received, processed and outstanding.

However, delays occurred in the assessment of changes of circumstances. The council needed to minimise these delays, which increase the number and level of preventable overpayments. The council also needed to improve the management of HB and CTB overpayments to control the level of outstanding debt and increase overpayment recovery.

The council's performance in verifying new claims and changes of circumstances was very impressive. As information and evidence was routinely verified and crosschecked the risk of fraud and error at the outset and during the life of a claim was significantly reduced.

The absence of clear management responsibility and accountability for counter-fraud work undermined the council's approach to the detection, investigation and deterrence of fraud. Better checking and review of investigators' work is necessary to help ensure that investigations were of appropriate quality.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is considering the report and may ask the council for proposals in response to BFI's findings.

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate Report on Inverclyde Council's Processing of Claims for Housing Benefits

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefot Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) report inspection report on Inverclyde council was published on 22 September 2005 and is available in the Library.

In 2004–05, Inverclyde council administered some £34.9 million in housing benefits, about 13 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure. In May 2005, BFI carried out a focused inspection on the processing of new claims for housing benefit and council tax benefit by Inverclyde council.

The council was selected because it was taking on average 71 days, against the national standard of 36 days, to process new claims for the period April to June 2004. Since January 2005 the council has shown consistent improvement in its performance, achieving 33 days by April 2005. However, the council's focus on improving speed of processing has meant that other areas have lacked attention, particularly accuracy levels. The council could also do more in terms of performance monitoring, making effective use of internal and external audit reports and staff training.

The council lacked correct management information, key performance targets and objectives and did not monitor performance well. However, staff are committed to tackle the problems and said they will use the BFI report to complement an existing service improvement initiative.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is considering the report and may ask the council for its proposals in response to BFFs findings.

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate Report on West Lindsey District Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) inspection report on West Lindsey district council was published on 22 September 2005 and is available in the Library.

In 2003–04 West Lindsey district council administered some £13.7 million in housing benefits, about 46 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure. The council was selected for inspection following BFFs comprehensive performance assessment in October 2003, which highlighted weaknesses in claims processing, overpayments and counter-fraud activity. A number of major improvements had been successfully implemented since then, including a new benefits IT system and organisational changes. West Lindsey

district council had improved the speed of processing new claims from an average of 46 days in 2003–04 to 39 days at the time of BFFs inspection in February 2005, just outside the DWP standard of 36 days. Although the council had not fully introduced the verification framework, the evidence gathering to support a claim was generally sound. But the council reported paying the right amount of benefit in only 93 per cent. of cases, which puts it in the bottom quartile for all local authorities. BFI concluded that improvements in the speed of processing new claims had to some extent been at the expense of quality.

The number of counter-fraud sanctions, including prosecutions, had increased from 12 in 2003–04 to 43 in the 10 months up to January 2005. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is considering the report and may ask the council for proposals in response to BFFs findings.

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate Report on North Wiltshire District Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the BFI inspection report on North Wiltshire district council was published on 22 September 2005 and is available in the Library.

In 2004–05, North Wiltshire district council administered some £19.6 million in housing benefits, about 40 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure. The council was chosen for a focused inspection because it reported that it was taking 123 days on average to process new claims for benefit for the quarter ended 31 December 2004. This level of performance was in the bottom quartile of all reported performance. However, because of long term IT problems, the Department had granted the council exemption from completion of quarterly management information returns from January 2005.

The loss of a number of experienced staff during the early part of 2004–05 put further pressure on the service and led to a backlog of claims. This was cleared in January 2005 when the old IT system was closed down, but data conversion problems meant that when the new benefits IT system went live in March 2005, a further backlog existed. Despite continuing IT problems, the council were working hard to clear a backlog of benefit cases and, if the backlog is excluded, the council were clearing new claims within the DWP standard of 36 days. The standard of verification of claims was good.

Management reports and performance monitoring systems were being developed as the council was becoming more familiar with its new IT system. However, these management controls need to be linked to systematic management checking and individual and team targets to ensure that the performance improvements are sustained.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is considering the report and may ask the council for its proposals in response to BFFs findings.

Principles of Welfare Reform

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. David Blunkett):

Today we publish the Department's principles of welfare reform, which contain the values and principles which shape the Government's vision of the future welfare state. A copy has been placed in the Library, and copies are available to hon. Members in the Vote Office.

Our values of equality, opportunity, fairness and social justice underpin these principles. We have already moved away from a passive social security system which could be caricatured as encouraging welfare dependency. The next stage of welfare reform will be designed not only to help people to return to work, but also progress in work.

The Government will help people achieve success for themselves and their families by building the necessary skills and assets for future personal security. It will provide support, nationally and locally, and help individuals fulfil their potential.

Our core principles are to:

- help people to help themselves by offering a ladder to self-reliance and self-determination, not merely a safety net in time of need;
- see work as the best route out of welfare;
- promote understanding and enable people to make informed choices for themselves;
- balance rights with responsibilities, while recognising the need for support and care where appropriate;
- recognise our mutual interdependence and obligation to each other, promoting solidarity between generations, and the importance of using the resources of Government to help people cope with rapid economic and social change;
- ensure the role of the state is active, liberating and enabling;
- address the root causes of poverty and overcome intergenerational disadvantage and exclusion;
- contribute to a stable and growing economy through investment in the potential of every individual, and flexibility of support in and out of work.

The foundations we help build will widen economic opportunity, support improvement in productivity and prosperity, and assist with continuing economic growth and social inclusion.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 11 October 2005

CABINET OFFICE

Public Sector Ombudsmen Services

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Hutton): The Government launched in August a consultation document on reform of public sector ombudsmen services in England.

The proposed reforms would remove some of the existing legislative constraints that prevent the main public sector ombudsmen—the parliamentary ombudsman, the health service ombudsman, and the local government ombudsman—from working collaboratively to provide a more efficient and streamlined service to the citizen.

The consultation period ends on Friday 18 November. Copies of the consultation document are available in the Libraries of both Houses and available electronically at www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/propriety and ethics/parliamentary_ombudsman/ombudsmenreform.asp

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Electoral Administration

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and Lord Chancellor has made the following written statement in the other place today:

"The Government will shortly introduce legislation to improve the administration of elections. This will be accompanied by the publication of the Government's response to the DCA policy discussion paper and the Electoral Commission's securing the vote report.

This legislation will aim to make progress on the Government's three core principles for elections:

access to voting for all;

highest possible turnout; and

lowest possible fraud.

These key issues—access, participation and integrity—are those on which the legitimacy of our representative democracy depends.

We need to strike a balance between security and access. The changes that the Government will propose to Parliament aim to enhance both. Our key objectives are to ensure that all who are entitled to vote are on the register and improve safeguards against fraud.

The changes we propose include:

introducing performance standards, to be set by the Electoral Commission in consultation with the Secretary of State, to promote best practice in electoral services;

moving back the last date for registration, enabling people to register to vote after an election has been called;

placing a new duty on registration officers to take all necessary steps to ensure comprehensive registers. Those steps include the following specific measures:

(a) Sending the canvass form more than once to any address;

(b) Making house to house inquires on more than one occasion;

(c) Making contact by such other means as the ERO thinks appropriate with persons who do not have an entry in a register;

(d) Inspecting any records held by any person which the ERO is permitted to inspect; and

(e) Providing training to persons under the direction or control of the ERO in connection with the carrying out of the duty;

giving returning officers a new power to promote elections and electoral registration;

enabling parents and those with caring responsibilities to take children into the polling stationwith them when they go to vote;

providing for pre-poll information to be sent to all electors including details about their vote;

allowing electors to register anonymously in certain circumstances, so that registration doesnot compromise the safety of the vulnerable;

lowering the age of candidacy from 21 to 18;

simplifying guidance for voters, and enabling this to be available in languages other than English for those who need it;

establishing a framework for returning officers to conduct reviews of polling places every fouryears to ensure they meet accessibility criteria;

establishing two new electoral fraud offences, for falsely applying for a postal or proxy vote and for supplying false information or failing to supply information to the electoral registration officer at any time;

providing for pilots of personal identifiers (e.g. signatures and dates of birth) at registration to test the security benefits that this could bring and measure the effect on the completeness of the register;

establishing a framework for the co-ordinated on-line record of electors (CORE) to improve the accuracy and integrity of electoral registers and support national access and future data sharing between registers;

revising the offence of undue influence, enabling the offence to be effective even where influence has not led to any action being taken;

improving security markings on ballots papers;

introducing a marked register of postal votes received, similar to that currently used for polling station voters;

introducing statutory secrecy warnings to accompany postal and proxy voting papers to deter anyone from unlawfully attempting to influence another person's vote;

requiring voters to sign for their ballot paper at the polling station to act as a deterrent to fraud;

allowing access to accredited observers at polling stations and at other stages of the electoral process, such as the count, to enhance the openness and integrity of the electoral system; and

simplifying and clarifying regulations for political parties, including by standardising the period in which election expenses can be incurred at four months.

To provide for more flexibility and transparency in the administration of elections we will:

enable administrators to correct clerical and administrative errors during the course of the election;

introduce simpler and more flexible funding arrangements for national elections; and

support the administration of postal votes by enabling automated production of postal vote documents, including by removing the counterfoil on ballot papers and replacing the stamping perforation with a pre-printed security mark.

We will also seek to address the concerns raised by the hon. Member Sir Patrick Cormack of South Staffordshire in relation to the death of an election candidate during the campaign period by reducing the time delay for setting a new date of poll. We also intend to respond to the issue of candidates standing in more than one constituency at the same election, which Sir Patrick raised in his speech on 6 July.

We also plan to introduce a package of secondary legislation echoing the principles I have set out above. These measures are based on existing primary legislation, and our aim is that they should be in place in time for the next local elections in May 2006, to improve public confidence in our electoral system.

A full announcement on the secondary legislation package will be made in due course. Specifically it will deal with questions around how and when voters can apply for a postal vote or a replacement, the process by which postal votes are returned to administrators and how postal votes are collected on polling day. It will also address the issue of standard polling hours for local elections. More detail on the individual proposals are included in the response to the DCA policy discussion paper and Securing the vote report, also published today.

These measures will be consolidated with regulations concerning access to and supply of the electoral register. Both sets of regulations will be subject to the affirmative resolution procedure. It is intended that they will be laid before Parliament in the near future so the debate can run alongside the Government's proposed legislation.

The legislation will be accompanied by the publication of the DCA paper *Electoral Administration—legislative proposals resulting from consideration of the policy discussion paper published on 25 May 2005*, including a response to the Electoral Commission's securing the vote report. This paper is also available on the DCA website: www.dca.gov.uk\legist\electadmin.htm."

DEFENCE

Far East Civilian Internees (Compensation)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Don Touhig): In my written ministerial statement on 13 July, *Official Report*, column 28WS, I apologised to those British civilians who were interned by the Japanese during the Second World War in the Far East and who were led by the incomplete terms of our initial announcement of the scheme in November 2000 to think that they would qualify for an ex-gratia payment. The apology was for the distress caused to those who claimed before the eligibility criteria were fully spelt out and who, in particular, would have qualified but for later clarification that "British" was to be defined by the birth-link criterion.

In my Statement I undertook to examine whether the apology should be expressed in a tangible form. I have, therefore, decided that a one-off payment of £500 should go to each of those individuals to whom the apology in my Statement of 13 July was addressed. I also intend to send a personal letter to each of those who will be compensated. We expect to establish eligibility and make payments for the majority of cases within six months.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Regional Fire and Rescue Service (Control Centres)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Jim Fitzpatrick): I am pleased to be able to announce the location for the South-East fire and rescue control centre and put on record the locations for the other seven new control centres.

England's fire and rescue service control functions will be delivered through a resilient national network of nine new control centres, one for each of the English regions. The centres will be mutually supporting and will bring the best of the latest proven technology together into one system. This will increase resilience, operational performance and improve public safety.

The following developers and sites have been selected, following an EU procurement process, for the eight English regions excluding London, to build the fire and rescue service control centres for England.

Region	*Developer*	*Site Address*
SE	Easter Group and Morley Fund Management	Croft Business Park, Fareham, Hampshire
EM	Wilson Bowden Developments Ltd	Willow Farm Business Park Castle Donington, Derbyshire
EoE	Slough Trading Estate Limited	Cambridge Research Park Cambridge
NE	Helios (Belmont) Ltd	Belmont Business Park Durham
NW	Lingley Mere Business Park Development Corporation Ltd	Lingley Mere Business Park Warrington
SW	Summerfield Developments (SW) Limited	Blackbrook Business Park Taunton, Somerset
WM	Bowmer and Kirkland Group—Peveril Securities Ltd (Development Subsidiary)	Wolverhampton Business Park Wolverhampton
Y&H	Yorkcourt Properties Ltd	Paragon Wakefield

London already has a regional control centre and is expected to form part of the national network. Exactly how this will be implemented is to be taken forward with the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority. The whole national network will be fully operational before the Olympics in 2012.

Further details are available on the FiReControl project website. http://www.firecontrol.odpm.gov.uk/.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Marine Fisheries Agency

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): In December last year I announced the Government's intention to establish a new executive agency with responsibility for the management of marine fisheries, to include the inspection and enforcement activities then discharged by my Department's Sea Fisheries Inspectorate, and other marine delivery functions carried out by DEFRA.

I am now pleased to announce that the new body was launched on 1 October and is called the Marine Fisheries Agency. The first chief executive of the agency is Nigel Gooding, who will now take forward the challenge of delivering high-quality, integrated marine fisheries management and environmental conservation services to the agency's many stakeholders. Those services will include the management of the fisheries licensing and quota regimes, the provision of grant aid to the industry and the enforcement of national and European regulations in England. It will also undertake similar services in Wales on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government.

The creation of the Marine Fisheries Agency is an important milestone in the Government's drive for public service reform and in my own Department's internal change programme. My Department is committed to reducing the size of its policy core and to the delivery of its services through others.

Copies of the Agency's Framework Document, Corporate Plan and Key Targets are in the Libraries of both Houses.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Overseas Network

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): In December 2003, I set out the Government's international priorities for the next five to 10 years and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's strategy for delivering them in a world of new challenges, opportunities and threats.

On the basis of that strategy and the outcome of the 2004 spending round I announced on 15 December 2004, *Official Report*, columns 137–40WS, changes to the overseas network, aimed at enhancing our effectiveness in representing British interests abroad, and helping to deliver an efficient service on behalf of the British taxpayer.

However, in the light of further reviews I have agreed to make the following small adjustments to our plans:

One subordinate post, Hamburg, scheduled to remain open with locally based staff, will now close and our interests will be covered from Berlin. Two subordinate posts, Munich and Miami, will now continue to be headed by a UK based member of staff rather than covered entirely by locally engaged staff as originally proposed. Other changes will go ahead before end 2006, as previously announced.

The overall picture on implementation of the changes announced in December is as follows:

Post	*Planned change*	*State of Play*
ASIA PACIFIC		
Port Vila (Vanuatu)	Close	To be closed by end 2006
Nuku'alofa (Tonga)	Close	To be closed by end 2006
Dili (East Timor)	Close	To be closed by end 2006
Tarawa (Kiribati) (currently a locally staffed post)	Close	Closed
AMERICAS		
Asuncion (Paraguay)	Close	Closed
Nassau (Bahamas)	Close	Closed
AFRICA		
Maseru (Lesotho)	Close	Closed
Mbabane (Swaziland)	Close	Closed
Antananarivo (Madagascar)	Close	Closed
AUSTRALIA		
Brisbane	Localise	To be localised by end 2006
Perth	Localise	To be localised by end 2006
NEW ZEALAND		
Auckland	Localise	Localised
JAPAN		
Fukuoka	Close	Closed
LAOS		
Vientiane (Laos)(Trade Office)	Close	Closed
UNITED STATES		
Seattle	Localise	Localised
Miami	Localise	To remain UK based
Phoenix	Close	Closed
Dallas	Close	Closed
San Juan (Puerto Rico)	Close	Closed
FRANCE		
Bordeaux	Localise	To be localised by end 2006
Lyon	Localise	To be localised by end 2006
GERMANY		
Munich	Localise	To remain UK based
Hamburg	Localise	To close by end 2006
Frankfurt	Close	To close by end 2006
Leipzig	Close	Closed
Stuttgart	Close	To close by end 2006
SPAIN		
Palma	Localise	To be localised by end 2006
Bilbao	Localise	Localised
PORTUGAL		
Oporto	Close	Closed
CAMEROON		
Douala	Close	Closed

In addition, I have agreed the following further changes to the network:

In Brazil, following a review of our commercial effort there, I have agreed that our Trade Offices in Belo Horizonte and Curitiba should be closed, but the existing Honorary Consuls will remain. Commercial services currently provided in Belo Horizonte and Curitiba will in future be delivered through our other posts in Brazil. In India we plan to upgrade our Business Information Centres in Pune and Chandigarh to British Trade Offices and cease to operate a Business Information Centre in Bhopal.

The full details of these additional changes are as follows:

Post	*Planned Change*
Trade Office, Curitiba, Brazil	Close. Honorary Consul to remain. Trade interests covered from other Posts in Brazil (Brasilia, Sao Paulo or Rio de Janeiro).
Trade Office, Belo Horizonte, Brazil	Close. Honorary Consul to remain. Trade interests covered from other Posts in Brazil (Brasilia, Sao Paulo or Rio de Janeiro).

Post	*Planned Change*
Business Information Centre, Bhopal, India	Close. British Council Library to remain. Trade interests covered from Mumbai.
Business Information Centre, Pune	Upgrade to full Trade Office.
Business Information Centre, Chandigarh	Upgrade to full Trade Office.

We have no other plans to close or open any further sovereign posts but like any well-run organisation we will continue to move resources flexibly as priorities require in line with UK interests. I will inform the House of any further planned changes.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Southern Africa

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): Assessments in Southern Africa have identified that over 10 million people are likely to face food shortages in the period up to April 2006 in Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, Lesotho and Swaziland. Both the UN Secretary General and the Executive Director of the World Food Programme have written to donor Governments about this.

The Scale of the Problem

Country assessments are carried out by national committees and are co-ordinated regionally by the Southern African Development Community (SADC). They consider whether households will be able to access their normal food requirements between harvests. Assessment reports can be found at the website of the Southern African Development Community: www.sadc.int. The figures include those with potential food shortages ranging from 1 per cent. to over 80 per cent. of their normal food requirements.

The breakdown by country is as follows:

Zimbabwe—The Zimbabwe Government have not yet published the national assessment but independent estimates range from 3 million to 5 million people facing food shortages over the coming months. This is as a result of erratic rains, HIV/AIDS and bad governance. The World Food Programme, with support from DFID, is presently providing food aid for 1 million vulnerable people, mainly children. Operations will grow as the numbers in need increase. In addition, the Government of Zimbabwe's forced clearance of unauthorised dwellings earlier this year, Operation Murambatsvina ("Clean Up"), displaced or destroyed the livelihoods of 700,000 people, making poverty and food shortages worse in both urban and rural areas. The Zimbabwe Government's own efforts to mitigate the suffering caused by their mass evictions have been very limited, and in some instances, the Government have obstructed the wider humanitarian effort, for example by refusing to accept the provision of tents and other temporary shelters for those without shelter. Despite these difficulties, a range of UN and non-governmental agencies are operating relief programmes reaching 40,000 affected households, including those affected by HIV and AIDS, with food, blankets, medical care and other essential items. It is a tragedy that humanitarian needs in Zimbabwe have been exacerbated by the disastrous policies of the Government, which have led to economic collapse and social and political crises.

Malawi—Up to 4.2 million people could face food shortages, though this number could rise to 4.6 million if price rise sharply. The Government and the World Food Programme have started a coordinated emergency programme targeting the 2.7 million most vulnerable people. A range of other safety nets are in place, such as food for work and cash for work programmes, and the Government have taken steps to increase the import of maize available for purchase through Government and commercial channels. A UN appeal for $88 million was launched in September covering food aid and distribution of seeds and fertiliser. $28 million has been contributed to the appeal, including $9 million (£5 million) from the UK Government.

Zambia—At least 1.2 million people in the Southern, Western and Eastern Provinces could face food shortages before the next harvest in February-March 2006. The Government are still considering whether an emergency appeal is needed. In the meantime, the World Food Programme and an NGO consortium are distributing food aid.

Mozambique—Up to 587,000 people could face food shortages, mostly in the south of the country. There is no emergency programme but the World Food Programme is distributing some food aid and the Government have established a range of safety nets, such as food for work programmes and free or subsidised seed distribution so that the poorest households have enough seeds to plant for next year.

Lesotho—About 440,000 people could face food shortages. These are virtually all in households that suffer from chronic food insecurity. The Government are trying to respond through safety nets, including through a recently introduced old age pension.

Swaziland—About 225,000 people could face food shortages in households that suffer from chronic food insecurity. As in Lesotho, other responses to chronic hunger, apart from food aid, are being encouraged, such as provision of seeds and fertiliser to poorer households.

What are the UK Government doing?

In response to this emerging crisis, the UK Government have already allocated this year over £57 million in humanitarian assistance for the region. Some of this has been channelled through UN agencies and some has gone through Governments or NGOs. The breakdown of our commitments so far this year is as follows:

Zimbabwe—£40 million covering relief programmes for up to 3 million people provided through non-government channels, including contributions to the World Food Programme, HIV/AIDS programmes and responses to those affected by Operation Murambatsvina.

Malawi—Over £15 million towards the Government's emergency food distribution, helping to purchase maize, options on additional maize, and seeds, support to the Government's logistics and early warning capacity and support to UNICEF's nutrition rehabilitation units. Government of Malawi planning for the emergency began in March with help from early pledges from the UK.

Zambia—£430,000 to the World Food Programme for food aid distribution to 3,280 households with at least one person enrolled in a medical treatment programme across the affected provinces, and £1 million to Oxfam for cash transfers to 14,350 households in Western Province. Together these will reach over 100,000 people.

Mozambique—£355,000 for cash for work programmes and provision of seeds to poor households.

Lesotho—£350,000 for distribution of seeds and fertilisers and small-scale livestock interventions.

Swaziland—£300,000 for distribution of seeds and fertilisers and other necessary help for vulnerable households.

Information systems for assessing and monitoring needs are improving in Southern Africa with support from DFID. The capacity of national Governments to respond to humanitarian needs remains limited though and it is essential that the international community reacts quickly when the assessments indicate that action is needed. I have urged EU member states to respond speedily and will follow up with them when we meet later this month. I have also remained in contact with the UN on the international community's response. My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Gareth Thomas) recently visited Malawi and Zambia to discuss the food shortages with the Governments and people on the ground in these countries, and I have had discussions with Mr James Morris, the Executive Director of the World Food Programme.

The Wider Challenge

While the position in each country is different, there are high levels of chronic hunger across the region which reflect not just the depth of poverty but also the shockingly high levels of HIV and AIDS across Southern Africa. We need to tackle emergency food needs effectively. But that in itself will not end chronic hunger. We are therefore also making greater efforts to work with Governments to develop and implement safety nets, such as regular grants of cash and/or food, that will protect the most vulnerable households that regularly need emergency help. These include the elderly, orphans and vulnerable children, the disabled and others that simply cannot find work.

Early warning has helped to ensure that governments and the international community work together to meet humanitarian needs in Southern Africa, but we will continue to monitor the position closely and be ready to take further action if necessary. In Zimbabwe, we will work closely with the UN and other donors to do all we can to address the increasing suffering of poor people there.

At the end of last year, I also called upon the international community to support the establishment in the UN of a large, central fund to speed up the response to humanitarian emergencies and to support wider reforms of the international system to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. Progress is being made, with widespread endorsement of our reform proposals being achieved at the UN Millennium Review Summit in September and detailed follow up work now underway. So far 6 countries have agreed to commit $150 million to this fund next year; the UK's contribution will be $70 million (£40 million). We are pressing hard to ensure further countries contribute in time to get the fund working in the New Year.

Food Crisis (Niger)

The Secretary of State for International Development (Mr. Hilary Benn): Over the past three months a major humanitarian relief operation has been underway in Niger in response to a food crisis affecting an estimated 3 million people, with the lives of up to 150,000 children at risk. The humanitarian operation is now working at full capacity and has helped to avert a major catastrophe. The UK has played an important part, being one of the first donors to respond when the United Nations and NGO relief agencies alerted the world to the severity of the crisis. Intense media interest in the events in Niger subsequently encouraged other donors to join the effort, and an appeal by the Disasters and Emergency Committee, representing British relief and development NGOs, prompted a magnificent response from the British public.

Throughout this crisis, the UK Government have been one of the three largest donors, with a total contribution of £3.9 million (including modest support to targeted humanitarian aid in the neighbouring states of Mali and Burkina Faso). Combined with the donations made by the public, Britain has made the biggest total contribution to the Niger relief effort.

Although the immediate causes of Niger's problems were a poor harvest at the end of last year's growing season, and the additional stresses caused by a locust invasion in the Sahel which did significant damage to grazing lands, the crisis itself had much more complex roots and deeper causes. Niger lies at the bottom of the UN Human Development Index as the world's poorest country. A large proportion of the population is chronically poor and therefore highly vulnerable to even quite modest shortfalls of food and other necessities. Last year's harvest was in fact only 7 per cent. below the average of recent years and a year ago there were good reasons to believe that a crisis could be avoided altogether. A combination of factors—including garbled information from early warning systems, inappropriate plans for dealing with the problem, unusually high food prices, and a failure of contingency planning and disaster preparedness—tipped the balance and plunged Niger into crisis.

The seriousness of this became evident as the results of NGO nutritional surveys became available in April and May. This was followed by an emergency appeal by the UN in mid May. DFID had been following events in the Sahel region as a whole for many months. In August last year we gave £1.5 million to the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation to help tackle the locust invasion. Our humanitarian advisers immediately contacted the UN when it launched its emergency appeal in May, and in June we sent an expert to Niger to assess the situation on the ground. This was followed by an immediate contribution of £0.5 million to support the relief efforts of the World Food Programme (WFP), followed by a further £2.7 million to the UN and to NGO partners soon afterwards. The bulk of our support was provided ahead of the coverage that drew world attention to the crisis and prompted further donations from both Governments and the public.

In the early stages of the crisis we funded two emergency airlifts, by Save the Children and UNICEF, to speed up the delivery of life-saving supplies for child nutritional therapy. Since then, as a result of our funding, the WFP has been able to deliver general food rations to 1.6 million people. OXFAM has provided much needed cash vouchers to 131,000 people. The Save the Children Fund has treated 13,000 malnourished children and delivered medicines and supplies to 12 health centres. Islamic Relief has delivered medicines and supplies to 30 health centres. Concern has treated 6,000 malnourished children, and the World Health Organisation has helped contain a cholera outbreak that threatened to make the crisis even worse.

To date around 2.8 million people have received food aid and more than 90,000 children have received life-saving nutritional therapy. Thanks to good rains this year, food is now being harvested and a bumper crop is expected. Nonetheless, the relief effort will continue in the months ahead, with priority being given to the needs of malnourished children and to those who will not benefit fully or adequately from the new harvest. Much work also remains to be done to help those who have suffered during the crisis to recover, and in the longer term to put in place welfare safety nets and other measures to help the most impoverished people of Niger avoid further crises of this kind.

Although the international relief effort has succeeded in heading off a major disaster, it was too slow in getting underway. An earlier, better-planned response may well have avoided a major crisis. What has happened in Niger is symptomatic of fundamental weaknesses in the international system for humanitarian response for which urgent remedies are required.

At the end of last year I called upon the international community to support the establishment in the UN of a large, central fund to speed up the response to humanitarian emergencies and to support wider reforms of the international system to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. If this package of reforms had been in place sooner, the crisis in Niger may have been averted. Progress is now being made in changing the system, with widespread endorsement of our reform proposals being achieved at the recent UN Millennium Review Summit and detailed follow up work now under way. So far six countries have agreed to commit $150 million to this fund next year; the UK's contribution will be $70 million (£40 million). We are pressing hard to ensure that further countries contribute in time to get the fund working in the New Year.

TRANSPORT

British Transport Police Review

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Alastair Darling): British Transport Police carries out an important role in maintaining the security of the railways and in deterring potential terrorist activity. The excellent work that it does was shown in the events in London on 7 and 21 July.

Following discussion with the BTP Chief Constable, and in the context of the current review of the 43 local police forces being undertaken by the Home Secretary, I will be reviewing the role of the British Transport Police. My review will examine the functions of the British Transport Police and whether some or all of these are best carried out by a national force, regional forces or, indeed, by the industry itself. This review is aimed at ensuring that policing of the railways is fit for the 21st century.

The Government remain committed to the principle that the costs of policing the railway should remain largely funded by the industry itself.

I will be placing the terms of reference for this review in the House Library shortly.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Fraud (East Dunbartonshire Council)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) inspection report on East Dunbartonshire council was published on 11 August 2005 and is available in the Library.

In 2004-05, East Dunbartonshire council administered some £48 million in housing benefits, about 31 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure. The council was selected for a focused inspection of claims administration because it reported that it was taking 92 days to process new claims for the quarter ending 30 September 2004.

BFI found that the council did not meet any of the performance standards relating to claims processing, but the sample of cases that BFI examined showed that it was processing new claims in an average of 42 days against the standard of 36. The figure of 92 days that the council had been reporting was wrong because the council had made errors in processing and data input, leading to overstatements of the time taken to process claims. Existing arrangements to monitor the delivery of targets and plans do not provide sufficient assurance about the levels of performance actually being achieved.

The council's claim form did not meet the requirements of the Department's HCTB1 claim form. The council had adopted the Department's Verification Framework but to comply with the framework improvements need to be made.

BFI noted a clear commitment to improve performance. The council plans to implement all of the recommendations made in the BFI report.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is considering the report and may ask the council for its proposals in response to BFI's findings.

Caerphilly County Borough Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (James Plaskitt): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) inspection report on Caerphilly county borough council was published on 11 August 2005 and is available in the Library.

In 2003-04, Caerphilly county borough council administered some £41 million in housing benefits, about 18 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure.

Overall, the inspection found that the council was performing to a fair standard in housing benefit and council tax benefit administration and counter-fraud activities. While there were some strengths it did not meet any of the seven functional areas of performance standards. The council had not implemented some significant recommendations made in BFI's first inspection report published in November 2002 even though internal and external audit had repeated those recommendations.

Although the council was reporting times for its processing of new claims that put it in the top quartile, procedural errors meant that the council was paying claims before all the necessary evidence had been obtained from the customer.

The council recovered a high proportion of overpayments, but the findings showed procedural errors that meant that recoveries were being made from the wrong person and at the wrong rates. The council did not prioritise the recovery of fraud overpayments.

The council had secured 54 sanctions against fraudsters between April 2004 and February 2005 which is good progress.

To ensure it provides an effective and secure benefits service, the council must ensure that it implements the recommendations from this inspection.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is considering the report and may ask the council for its proposals in response to BFI's findings.

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) announced its phase 13 programme of work on 5 September 2005.

Many local authority customers are let down by slow benefits services and some authorities do not seem to be tackling fraud rigorously. BFI will be undertaking seven inspections of local authorities taking longer than seven weeks on average to process housing benefits claims. The authorities are Braintree district council, Fenland district council, Isle of Anglesey county council, London Borough of Newham, London Borough of Tower Hamlets, Manchester city council, and Thurrock borough council.

It is important to deter fraudsters by applying sanctions, including prosecutions; therefore BFI will inspect 12 authorities that in comparison with their caseload have applied few sanctions, including successful prosecutions. The authorities are Bath and North East Somerset, Durham city council, East Lothian council, Ellesmere Port and Neston borough council, Hastings borough council, Highland council, Leicester city council, Neath and Port Talbot county borough council, Newport city council, North East Derbyshire district council, Rother district council and Woking borough council.

St. Edmundsbury borough council, which did not return performance data to the Department in 2004–05, will be inspected to determine their performance in claims cessing and customer service.

BFI is an independent unit within the Department for Work and Pensions that inspects and reports directly to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on the standard of benefits administration and counter-fraud activity in local authorities and the Department itself.

Uttlesford District Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (James Plaskitt): On behalf my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI), inspection report on Uttlesford district council was published on 11 August 2005 and is available in the Library.

In 2004–05, Uttlesford district council administered some £10.7 million in housing benefits, about 33 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure. The council's commitment to combat fraud was commendable. Administrative penalties were recovered efficiently and all successful prosecutions were given publicity in order to deter potential fraudsters.

The council had, however, misinterpreted the rules governing the security against fraud and error (SAFE) scheme. This had resulted in a higher value of rewards being claimed than was due. Although the standard of interviews under caution was high and all relevant legislation was followed, BFI found that in the majority of cases where a formal caution had been administered a full admission of guilt had not been obtained from the customer. The anti-fraud team had no service plan and the only target that it worked towards was a monetary target for claimed SAFE rewards. BFI recommended that a broader range of targets covering quality and joint working should be introduced and that case reviews, management checks and the process for deciding which sanction to apply all needed to be formalised.

The council's commitment to learn and put things right was impressive and many issues that were identified during the inspection were corrected immediately.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is considering the report and may ask the council for its proposals in response to BFI's findings.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 12 October 2005

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Counter-Terrorism Legislation and Practice

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): A Foreign and Commonwealth Office research paper on counter-terrorism legislation and practice in selected countries is published today. Copies will be placed in the Library of the House and will be available in the Vote Office. The paper will be available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: www.fco.gov.uk and also on the Home Office website: www.homeoffice.gov.uk. Printed copies will also be available on request from both Departments.

The Government have, since the terrorist attacks in London in July, been assessing the practical and legislative steps needed to build on the counter terrorism measures already in place in this country. The Government are consulting widely on the measures that are now proposed. The research paper is intended to inform that process by providing background information on the approaches taken in a selection of other countries.

Global Opportunities Fund

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): I will today lay before the House the Foreign and Commonwealth Office annual report on the global opportunities fund 2004–05. This is the second such report which covers the financial year (FY) 2004–05.

Copies will be placed in the Library of the House. Additional copies can also be obtained from the Vote Office and the Printed Paper Office. A copy will also be available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website www.fco.gov.uk/gof.

I launched the GOF to focus the FCO's programme spending more closely on our priorities and to bring greater professionalism to our programme and project management work. It has made an impressive start.

The GOF's second year has built upon the foundations laid in 2003–04. Its programmes are now directly aligned to the strategic priorities which continue to support an impressive portfolio of projects, many of which are beginning to bear fruit. The fund has also played a key role in the evolution of the wider FCO programme budget. From FY 2006–07, it will expand to include all strategic programmes (drugs and crime fund, migration and overseas territories programme) so that the FCO can provide well-structured and coherent support to its overarching strategy.

The report provides an overview of the six GOF programmes and describes project activity. It also contains a section on lessons learned/forward look to the current FY.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Terrorism Update

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Clarke): The House may find it helpful to have an update on legislative and other developments in the field of terrorism since my last statement to the House on 20 July.

I am today publishing the Terrorism Bill, together with the accompanying explanatory notes.

Also today I am publishing a report by the Independent Reviewer of the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005, Lord Carlile of Berriew, on the Government's proposals to changes to laws on terrorism. I am grateful to Lord Carlile for a characteristically thorough and thoughtful report.

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary is today publishing a paper on the operation of anti-terrorist legislation in other countries.

I launched a consultation on the list of unacceptable behaviours on 5 August and it concluded on 19 August. There were just over 100 responses to the consultation from organisations and individuals. In light of the comments made I modified the list to ensure that it is more accurately focused on the activities that I am seeking to address. On 24 August I announced the revised list.

The purpose of the list is to set out some specific activities that are likely to result in a person being excluded or deported from the UK. I decided to publish the list to enable greater scrutiny of the use of my powers to exclude and, in turn, reassurance that they are being applied consistently, proportionately and reasonably.

An initial database drawn principally from a list of 100 non-UK nationals provided by FCO posts overseas has been compiled and exclusions of individuals on this list are now being considered case by case. Further names will be added in the coming months.

We also propose to add new clauses to the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Bill. These cover excluding those associated with terrorism from asylum, deprivation of British citizenship where this is conducive to the public good, and non-suspensive appeals against deportation orders in national security cases.

I am seeking the views of Opposition spokesmen on these additional measures and have today written to the right hon. Member for Haltemprice and Howden (David Davies) and the hon. Member for Winchester (Mr. Oaten) setting out in fuller detail what these will cover. These will be published in the usual way as amendments to the Bill. We aim to table these amendments at the Bill's Committee stage in the Commons.

On 22 September, I welcomed the initial findings of the seven Muslim community working groups brought together to identify proposals for tackling violent extremism. These included proposals for a National Advisory Council of Imams and Mosques, a National Forum against Extremism and Islamaphobia, and a country-wide "roadshow" of influential, populist religious scholars. On the same day, the Home Office also launched a £5 million "capacity building fund" to support all faith communities to play an active role in building a cohesive society.

Last Thursday, 6 October, I published a consultation paper on how to deal with places of worship that foment extremism. The consultation closes on 11 November.

On Monday 10 October I laid an order under the Terrorism Act 2000 to proscribe an additional 15 organisations. It will be debated in both Houses tomorrow.

Also on Monday 10 October I made a written ministerial statement, column 9WS, giving my quarterly report on the operation of the control order regime provided for by the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005.

On the international front, the UK hosted a JHA Informal council in Newcastle on 12 and 13 September, at which the key issues of data retention and an EU CT strategy were considered by Interior and Justice Ministers. The EU has drafted an EU Strategy and Action Plan to tackle Radicalisation and Recruitment. This will go to the European Council in December.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1624—calling on States to prohibit incitement to commit terrorist acts, to prevent such conduct and deny safe haven to any person guilty of such conduct—was adopted on 14 September 2005.

The International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism was signed by the Prime Minister in September 2005 at the UN Special Summit in New York.

On 5 October President Putin visited COBR to exchange views on counter-terrorism, being the first foreign head of Government to do so.

During the week commencing 3 October I visited New York and Washington to discuss CT with key US Government representatives and officials, and participated in an EU-US bilateral.

Earlier this month, the Prime Minister and I met our opposite numbers in Paris to discuss, inter alia, counter terrorism issues.

The Government have been actively seeking the agreement of Memoranda of Understanding on human rights assurances with key foreign Governments to enable deportations to proceed. The first such Memorandum was signed with Jordan in August and a copy has been placed in the Library. We are pursuing similar agreements with a number of other countries. These negotiations are ongoing.

The Government have debated with European partners how caselaw around the application of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) has developed, particularly in respect of how national security considerations are taken into account in deportation cases involving Article 3. Using normal practice, and with the support of the Netherlands, the UK has been granted leave from the European Court of Human Rights to intervene as a third party in a case which the Netherlands currently has before the Court, which turns on Article 3. We will ask the Court to revisit the issues surrounding national security expulsions in light of current circumstances.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

EU Competitiveness Council

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Alan Johnson): I chaired the first Competitiveness Council of the UK's EU Presidency in Luxembourg on 11 October 2005. Lord Sainsbury, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Science and Innovation, chaired the Council for the research item.

The first item on the agenda was the Internal Market Scoreboard. Commissioner McCreevy (Commissioner for Internal Market and Services) presented the results of the latest Scoreboard, published in July this year.

I then introduced a Progress Report on Better Regulation, and Vice President Verheugen (Commissioner for Enterprise and Industry) updated the Council on progress. The Report touched on the Commission's recent screening exercise, and the outcome of their consultation on simplification, but a more substantive debate on this is likely to take place at the Competitiveness Council on 28–29 November.

The third agenda item was on the Chemicals Regulation, REACH, for which I chaired a policy debate. We have put forward a Presidency compromise text and set questions to focus the debate on the topics of registration and information requirements. Over lunch, we did not address any formal agenda items. However, I chaired an informal discussion on Competitiveness and Climate Change, to look at the interaction of these two key areas.

Lord Sainsbury chaired the Research item, on the EU's 7th Framework Programme (FP7) on Research and Development. Commissioner Potocnik (Commissioner for Research) represented the Commission. We have set Presidency questions to guide the debate on the "Capacities" and "Ideas" sections of the FP7 Proposal. The debate is not intended to be conclusive, but is aimed at helping to draw up a Presidency compromise text, which will serve as the basis to finalise a partial general approach to FP7 at the Council in November.

Four items were presented by the Commission under Any Other Business.

(i) State Aid Action Plan and Innovation

(ii) European Enterprise Awards

(iii) Commission Communication on Industrial Policy

(iv) Life Sciences and Biotechnology

A fuller report will be made to the House shortly.

WORK AND PENSIONS

International Labour Conference

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): The 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference 2004 adopted a new Recommendation 195—Human Resources Development; Education, Training and Lifelong Learning. We have today laid before Parliament a White Paper entitled "International Labour Conference", Proposed action on a Recommendation adopted at the 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference 2004, Cm 6666, which has been placed in the Library.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 13 October 2005

TREASURY

Double Taxation (Botswana)

The Paymaster General (Dawn Primarolo): A new Double Taxation Convention with Botswana was signed on 9 September 2005. After signature, the text of the Convention was deposited in the Libraries of both Houses and made available on HM Revenue and Customs' website. The text of the Convention will be scheduled to a draft Order in Council and laid before the House of Commons in due course.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Criminal Injuries Compensation Appeals Panel

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. David Hanson): I have today published the Criminal Injuries Compensation Appeals Panel combined Corporate Plan (2004–07) and Business Plan (2005–06). The Corporate Plan sets out the long term strategic goals for the Panel over the three-year period, and the Business Plan sets out the Panel's key objectives and performance targets for the coming year.

Copies have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Oversight Commissioner's Report

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Shaun Woodward): I have today laid before this House a copy of the Oversight Commissioner's second statutory report for the year 2005 which was published on 27 September, in accordance with Section 68(4)(a) of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000.

This is the fifth report compiled by Al Hutchinson as Oversight Commissioner and the fourteenth in the series of oversight reports published since 2001.

I welcomed the opportunity last month to discuss the contents of the report with the Oversight Commissioner.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Performers' Moral Rights

The Minister for Energy (Malcolm Wicks): Two World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) treaties in the fields of copyright and performances are to be specified as European Community treaties in a Statutory Instrument being laid before Parliament. The WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty (WPPT) and the WIPO Copyright Treaty (WCT) are key international agreements dealing with rights for the creative industries.

The specification of these treaties will require positive resolutions in both Houses and will pave the way in due course for European Community ratification of these important international agreements and help secure rights for United Kingdom creators overseas.

Most of the requirements of these treaties were already in place in United Kingdom law. Most of the remaining requirements were introduced with the implementation in the United Kingdom of Directive 2001/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the harmonisation of certain aspects of copyright and related rights in the information society. This Directive was implemented by the Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003 (SI 2003 No. 2498). The specification of the two WIPO treaties would allow the introduction of the only remaining requirement of these treaties, moral rights for performers, by means of a further Statutory Instrument, which would be subject to negative resolution procedure. A draft of such a further Statutory Instrument accompanies the Explanatory Memorandum for the current Statutory Instrument. A public consultation exercise seeking views on how obligations on performers' moral rights should be implemented was conducted in 2005. Summary copies of the responses to the consultation exercise have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Fraud

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): The Department for Work and Pensions publishes a report on its strategy for reducing benefit fraud today. The report describes how fraud in the benefit system has reduced to around £0.9 billion—less than 1 per cent. of the total expenditure. It also sets out the Government's plans to continue this momentum over the next few years and the challenges ahead.

The report provides an analysis of the strategies we employed over the last few years which has resulted in a reduction of fraud in Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance, two of our most vulnerable benefits, by nearly two thirds since 1997.

The report acknowledges that there are still challenges for the Department to address and lays down our strategies for reducing loss further. These include increasing the use of private sector data to better target our investigations and to provide good quality risk information for front line staff that will help them prevent fraud.

The report has been placed in the Library and copies are available to hon. Members from the Vote Office. The report will also be available on the Department for Work and Pensions website through the following address: www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/dwp/2005/fsu/reducingfraud.pdf.

Written Ministerial Statements

Friday 14 October 2005

DEFENCE

Helicopter Low Flying Training Review

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Don Touhig): In October 2004 the Inquest was held into the tragic death of Mrs Heather Bell, who died in June 2003 when she was thrown from her horse which had been startled by a low flying Chinook helicopter. Following the Inquest, the Coroner wrote to the Ministry of Defence in November 2004 under Rule 43 of the Coroners rules, with recommendations of actions to be taken to reduce the possibility of such an accident happening again. On receipt of the letter a comprehensive review was begun into the conduct of Low Flying Training in Helicopters.

The conclusions of the review were published in a report on 14 September 2005. While it has not been possible to accept all of the recommendations, the Ministry of Defence has responded positively and constructively. Consequently, major changes have been introduced in the way in which low flying training by military helicopters is administered which will improve the information available to the public about this essential training activity through the MOD freephone advisory service. In addition, the Ministry of Defence has launched a joint safety campaign with the British Horse Society offering practical advice to horse riders.

I have placed the report of the review in the Library of the House.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Avian Influenza

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): On 13 October the European Commission announced that an H5 virus of avian influenza has been found in ducks and chickens in a back-yard flock in Romania. The precise strain of virus is not yet known. The Commission also announced that H5N1 had been confirmed in a flock of turkeys in Turkey. This is the first time that this particular flu strain—which is the one found in Asia and known to be transmissible in rare cases between birds and humans—has been found so close to Europe.

Imports of poultry, poultry meat and products into the EU from both Turkey and Romania have ceased. Member states are considering whether further precautionary steps could be appropriate.

The Government have taken a number of steps to tighten arrangements for detection of the disease and to stop it spreading. With key bird experts bodies we have put in place new arrangements for wild bird surveillance and are carrying out an immediate assessment of any revised risk of H5N1 coming to the UK in the light of the new circumstances. We will publish that risk assessment on our website today.

We already have comprehensive biosecurity guidance to keepers on the Defra website and we have been working with stakeholders to draw up fuller guidance to keepers on assessing their risks, biosecurity and worker protection which we are issuing to poultry groups and publishing on our website today. The Government also have a full public contingency plan for tackling an outbreak which has been used and tested during the recent Newcastle Disease outbreak.

Avian influenza is a notifiable disease and we are reminding poultry keepers to report any suspicion of disease immediately. We are calling on them to strengthen their biosecurity and make a plan to protect the health of their birds.

TRANSPORT

Transport Council

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Alistair Darling): My letters of 4 October to the Chairmen of the Lords and Commons Scrutiny Committees, placed in the Library of each House, outlined prospects for the Transport Council on 6 October which I chaired and which Stephen Ladyman attended for the UK. This statement summarises the outcome of that Council.

The Council had an exchange of views on the proposed Directive extending market access to international rail passenger services (part of the Third Rail Package). This would allow licensed rail companies to run such services, including carrying passengers between stations in the same country (cabotage). A large majority of Member States supported the principle of opening the market for such services. Most also supported the proposition that market access should only be limited where necessary to safeguard public services, as the Commission proposal envisages. Most Member States supported the proposed date of 1 January 2010 for opening the market. A large majority supported the principle of including cabotage, though some felt that cabotage should be phased in later.

The Council also considered the relationship between the rail market access proposal and the Commission's recent proposal for a Regulation on Public Service Obligations (PSOs) in Land Transport. There was general acknowledgement that certain provisions of the PSO proposal were closely linked to the rail market access proposal and that these needed further clarification. However, very few Member States considered that the two dossiers needed to be agreed at the same time.

Following this useful exchange of views, I informed the Council that the UK Presidency would. work on the basis of the views expressed, noting that agreement of the rail market access proposal might be possible at the 5 December Transport Council.

On EU-US aviation, the Commissioner reported to the Council on progress made in recent technical talks with the US. He requested the Council's support for an early resumption of formal negotiations. In the interventions which followed, several Member States restated the need for significant improvements in the

June 2004 offer. I concluded for the Presidency that there was unanimous support for resuming talks. However, there could be no guarantee of success, and an agreement would have to deliver real benefits to both sides. An agreement could be in stages, but if so there would have to be a commitment on both sides to completion. The Council and the Presidency would work closely with the Commission to achieve a good outcome.

Also in the field of aviation external relations, the Commissioner reported on progress in the negotiations with third countries on inclusion of Community designation clauses in their bilateral air service agreements with Member States.

The Council reached a general approach on a regulation on the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air. The aim of this proposal is two-fold: to prevent persons being refused carriage on the basis of disability or reduced mobility; and to guarantee the provision, without additional charge, of the assistance needed by disabled persons and those with reduced mobility to have effective opportunities for air travel. I expressed the hope that early agreement with the European Parliament might be possible.

Discussion over lunch revealed general support from Member States for the continuation of work on inclusion of aviation emissions within the EU Emissions Trading Scheme.

Also discussed over lunch was the innovative electronic Ministerial consultation recently staged by the UK Presidency on the mid-term review of the Commission White Paper. Our initiative was well received. The Commission said that the review would issue in 2006, to give time for more input from Member States, and noted agreement on 3 main areas for EU-level action; infrastructure TENs to support mobility and EU competitiveness; safety; and sustainable development. The main comments of Member States focussed on the need to manage the further inevitable increase in road traffic. Modal shift should be about encouraging all alternative modes—i.e. diversity and interoperability. The closing statement, together with the opening statement, are publicly available on the Department for Transport website

www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/df_tabout/documents/page/dft_about_038723.hcsp

and the UK presidency website at

www.eu2005.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket%2FXcelerate%2FShowPage&c=Page&cid=1079979819948&action=search&sf=mini&referrer=EUPres&stq=0&pubId=1079979670810&q=transport+white+paper.

There were a number of statements under Any Other Business.

Italy drew the Council's attention to the Informal Ministerial conference on road safety to be held in Verona on 4 and 5 November. Stephen Ladyman will co-chair the meeting.

France presented a paper on the impact on road transport of the rise in the price of fuel, on which there was no substantive discussion.

The Commission, in its report under AOB on aviation safety said that effective safety would require work on several fronts, including: developing the role of EASA (European Aviation Safety Agency); work to develop and manage a Community blacklist of carriers banned from operating in the EU; development of the SAFA (safety assessment of foreign aircraft) programme; and effective engagement with ICAO to improve international safety standards.

The Commission noted that its report on aviation security had shown that although overall standards were high, there were several areas for improvement. There was scope for Community standards to be applied more flexibly. The Commission had therefore proposed a new regulation (to replace Regulation 2320/2002).

The Commission made a statement on state aid for regional airports, introducing its new guidelines on funding of regional airports. The guidelines reflected an ECJ ruling which said that provision of infrastructure should not be to the detriment of competitors. There should be no funding for services which might compete with high speed rail services.

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 17 October 2005

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Legal Services

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Bridget Prentice): My right hon. and and noble Friend the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and Lord Chancellor (Lord Falconer of Thoroton) has made the following written statement in the other place today:

"On 15 December 2004, I informed the House that the Government welcomed Sir David Clementi's report on the regulation of legal services in England and Wales and broadly accepted his main recommendations.

Today I am pleased to be placing in the Libraries of both Houses a White Paper setting out the Government's proposals for the regulatory reform of legal services in England and Wales. Our proposals are consumer focussed and are the result of discussion with key stakeholders, and in particular consumer groups. I am especially grateful to representatives of Citizens Advice, the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Federation of Small Businesses, the National Consumer Council, and Which? who comprise the Consumer Advisory Panel which I established in March to advise the Department in developing our proposals for reform.

The Government are committed to putting in place a regulatory framework that puts the interests of the consumer first. A framework that will encourage more competition, innovation and transparency in the provision of legal services, but also one which will safeguard the independence and reputation of the legal professions.

The White Paper sets out the detail of our proposals. These include a Legal Services Board, an Office for Legal Complaints and the facilitation of alternative business structures for the delivery of legal services. It also provides for all partners in the regulatory framework to have statutory objectives and principles.

We will remove the existing 'maze' of oversight regulators by establishing a single, independent and powerful oversight regulator, the Legal Services Board. The Board will authorise new Front Line Regulators provided they meet its regulatory standards, including a requirement for the separation of their regulatory and representative functions.

Appointments to the Legal Services Board will be made on merit by the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs. Non-lawyers will be in the majority.

The Legal Services Board will be required to establish and maintain a Consumer Panel to ensure that consumers' views are heard. Appointments to the Panel will be on merit, and in accordance with the rules of the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

We will also build consumer confidence in the handling of complaints about lawyers by creating a new and independent Office for Legal Complaints. This Office will provide a single point of entry for all consumer complaints. It will be chaired by a non-lawyer, with non-lawyers in the majority. The Office will provide quick and fair redress to consumers in all circumstances. It will be independent in the handling of complaints and will ensure a consistency of approach. The Office will also refer any potential issues of misconduct to the front line regulator concerned for disciplinary action, monitoring the decisions made.

The Government also propose the facilitation of alternative business structures that may be used to deliver legal and certain other services. These new structures will enable different kinds of lawyers, and lawyers and non-lawyers, to work together on an equal footing. They will permit external investment. Through access to low cost capital and new skills these reforms will foster greater competition and innovation and enable providers better to respond to the demands of consumers. In this new environment consumer protection will be paramount and our proposals provide a range of important safeguards that will ensure the interests of the consumer are properly protected.

This White Paper confirms the Government's intention to put consumers at the heart of the delivery of legal services. In the months to come we will continue to work closely with consumers, the legal professions and other stakeholders to ensure that this becomes a reality".

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Personalised Learning

The Secretary of State for Education and Skills (Ruth Kelly): I am announcing today a step change in the support that the Government are providing to promote personalised learning.

It is this Government's central aim in education to promote excellence and equality. Providing more personalised support to children and young people, giving them strength in the basics in literacy and numeracy, stretching their aspirations, and focusing on their individual strengths, weaknesses and interests, is the key to delivering this.

The school reforms that this Government have introduced since 1997 have achieved much, and this summer's test and exam results by pupils aged 11, 14 and 16 were the highest ever. But we remain ambitious to go much further, and in particular to close the persistent gaps in attainment between children of different ethnic groups and social classes.

I am therefore announcing today that we intend to target £335 million, by 2007–08, specifically earmarked within the new Dedicated Schools Grant, to improve the personalisation of learning for all students in Key Stage 3.

With this resource, I expect all secondary schools to provide to pupils who need it, comprehensive and intensive catch up support in literacy and numeracy, embracing, where appropriate, one-to-one and small group tuition. Mastery of English and mathematics is the necessary foundation for all children and young people to succeed in school and beyond, and must be the first priority of everyone in the education system. Through the Government's Secondary National Strategy we will continue to offer guidance, teaching and learning materials of high quality and expert consultancy support to enable schools to take advantage of the new resources available.

The great majority of children, of course, have not fallen behind: they too deserve a personalised education. I also expect this investment to improve the support for gifted and talented pupils; and, also, through the development of extended services, to help to provide access to extra support or tuition in subject areas and other activities where children and young people have a particular interest or aptitude.

It must be for teachers and parents to decide together what will best meet a particular child's needs and potential. But, through School Improvement Partners and the new OFSTED inspection regime, every secondary school will be expected to demonstrate that it is planning and delivering intensive catch up support where it is needed; and tailored teaching and learning for every child.

In recognition of the importance of personalisation for those children from deprived backgrounds, within the overall school funding settlement we will target this investment particularly towards Local Authorities with the largest numbers of deprived children, and will expect Local Authorities to ensure that they focus it, in particular, towards their most deprived schools and those facing the greatest challenges. I will announce further details of this funding later this autumn, as part of the wider schools funding announcement for 2006–08.

For those schools with the highest numbers of pupils who have fallen behind, I will—in addition to the Dedicated Schools Grant funding outlined above—invest a further £60 million of DfES grant funding to be shared across the primary and secondary sectors in each of 2006–07 and 2007–08. This will allow schools facing the most acute challenges to ensure, through the support and guidance of the Primary and Secondary National Strategies, that they have the right workforce, trained and qualified to provide more effective one-to-one or small group tuition for all their lowest attaining pupils.

Although my announcement today is focused in particular on Key Stage 3 children, I expect all schools—primary and secondary—to increasingly personalise teaching and learning. I will also press forward with reforms to support groups who need the most support: children who have special educational needs; looked after children; and children from some black and minority ethnic backgrounds whose educational attainment is below national averages.

While one-to-one and small group tuition are crucial elements in our vision for truly personalised education, they must be a supplement to—not a substitute for—high quality whole class teaching and learning. We must ensure that whole class teaching consistently meets the needs of all children within the class. This is the absolute core of providing every child and young person with a tailored education. The guidance and training opportunities I have outlined above will support teachers in all schools to provide excellent, interactive lessons which will capture the imagination of every child in the class.

Further details of the Government's plans for personalised learning will be contained in the White Paper which I intend to publish later this month.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements Reports

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Fiona Mactaggart): I am today announcing the publication of the 4th annual Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) reports. I have arranged for copies to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The MAPPA arrangements, lead by Probation, Police and the Prison Service are making a positive contribution to improving the safety of communities across England and Wales. By establishing these arrangements to assess and manage the risk posed by sexual and violent offenders these agencies are helping to ensure that fewer people are re-victimised. Violence and sexual abuse are unacceptable wherever they occur and it is evident through these reports that such offenders are identified and better managed than ever before.

Although the number of offenders within the MAPPA remit continues to increase, we are addressing these additional demands and strengthening the local partnership and active risk management between other social care agencies including health, Social Services and housing.

In the 12 months covered by the report every area has recruited or is recruiting two lay people, appointed by the Secretary of State, to assist the MAPPA process and to improve public communication. This is vital in informing communities about these arrangements and will enhance public confidence in the actions agencies are taking.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

EU Competitiveness Council

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Alan Johnson): I chaired the first Competitiveness Council of the UK's EU Presidency in Luxembourg on 11 October 2005. My hon. Friend, Lord Sainsbury, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Science and Innovation, chaired the Council for the Research item. The UK did not make any interventions.

Commissioner McCreevy (Internal Market and Services) presented the results of the 2005 Internal Market Scoreboard, published in July. The Council took note of the information he provided, in particular that, compared to last year, considerable progress has been achieved in transposing internal market directives into national legislation in most Member States. The Council adopted conclusions without debate, emphasising that this is an area that requires continued effort.

The Council took note of a Presidency progress report on Better Regulation, which gave a brief account of ongoing work regarding the use of impact assessments in the legislative process, simplification of legislation, screening of pending legislative proposals, the Commission's pilot project on a methodology to measure administrative costs, and stakeholder consultation. Vice President Verheugen (Commissioner for Enterprise and Industry) updated the Council on the developments relating to the Commission Communication on "Better Regulation for Jobs and Growth in the EU" adopted in March 2005. He advised that the Commission intends to withdraw 68 proposals which do not comply with Lisbon objectives, and to publish a Communication on simplification by the end of October. The Council will return to the subject of Better Regulation at its next session at the end of November.

I chaired a policy debate on some of the key aspects of REACH, the draft Chemicals Regulation. There was broad support for a targeted approach to information

requirements, although some Member States preferred that this approach should only apply to existing substances. There was broad consensus to reduce the testing requirements for the registration of substances between 10 and 100 tonnes, while some Member States were willing to consider the possibility of exposure-based waiving for this tonnage range. There was also a broad consensus towards sharing of all data and joint submission of information for registrants of the same substance, provided that further consideration is given to provisions aiming to ensure a more cost-effective system and adequate protection of confidential business information. I was encouraged by the positive response to the Presidency compromise proposal, which has taken the Council a step closer to achieving political agreement in November.

We did not address any formal agenda items over lunch. However, I chaired an informal discussion on Competitiveness and Climate Change. This proved useful as a mechanism to encourage a focus on solutions that meet both competitiveness and environmental concerns. Almost without exception, Ministers recognised action on climate change as necessary.

There were four items under Any Other Business in the Council, on which there was no debate. Commissioner Kroes (Competition) presented the State Aid Action Plan: "Less and better targeted state aid: a roadmap for state aid reform 2005–2009" and a Communication on State Aid for Innovation. Vice President Verheugen informed the Council about the European Enterprise Awards Scheme, which will be launched in London on 14 November. Vice President Verheugen also presented a Communication on Industrial Policy, published by the Commission on 5 October, which looks at horizontal and sectoral issues and the challenges for EU industrial competitiveness. The Council intends to return to this subject for more in-depth discussion at a later date. The Council took note of Vice President Verheugen's information on the final AOB item on the third progress report on Life Sciences and Biotechnology, and that the Commission intends to update the Community Strategy on Life Sciences and Biotechnology in time for the 2007 Spring European Council.

Lord Sainsbury chaired the Research item, on the EU's 7th Framework Programme (FP7) for Research and Technological Development (2007–13). Commissioner Potocnik (Commissioner for Research) represented the Commission. The Council had an orientation debate on the "Capacities" and "Ideas" sections of the FP7 Proposal based on questions set by the Presidency. The UK submitted a written response to these questions (see Annex A). The Commission have suggested several new aspects to the 7th Programme: funding for basic research through a European Research Council; support for large-scale public-private partnerships to take forward industrial projects; and funding for new research infrastructures. The Council recalled that FP7 should be considered alongside the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP). In light of the discussions, the Presidency intends to draw up a revised draft text covering the whole proposal, to serve as the basis for finalising a "partial" general approach to FP7 at the Council in November. This should leave open the opportunity to adjust agreed parts of the proposal, should that be necessary in the light of negotiation of the financial perspective for 2007–13.

The Council adopted at first reading (without discussion) a directive aimed at improving safety of pedestrians by laying down technical requirements on frontal protection systems in motor vehicles. The directive amends directive 70/156/EEC. The Council also agreed without discussion a common approach concerning the approval of mechanical components of combinations of vehicles and re-treaded tyres. The Council adopted a set of draft decisions with a view to introduce the pan-EuroMediterranean system of cumulation of origin in agreements with third countries. In all cases, the UK voted in favour.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Opportunity for All

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. David Blunkett): Today I have published "Opportunity for All—Seventh Annual Report 2005" (Cm 6673). The report sets out our strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion, and reports on the indicators used to monitor progress. The report has been placed in the Library.

We are committed to achieving a fairer, more inclusive society where nobody is held back by disadvantage or lack of opportunity. I am pleased to report significant and sustained progress has been made on a range of our indicators. 41 of our 60 indicators now show an improving trend, compared with 35 last year. On some other indicators the data are not sufficiently robust to be able to determine trends.

Overall there are now 2 million fewer children and 2 million fewer pensioners living in absolute poverty since 1997, and there are 2.3 million more people in work, with unemployment the lowest for 30 years. And those in deprived communities have seen improvements in employment, education and housing.

In this year's "Opportunity for All", there are two new chapters; one on women and one on Europe.

The women's chapter highlights the improvements we have made in areas such as increased employment and flexible working, and increased maternity leave and child care provision, whilst setting out our current cross-Governmental programme of action to address issues which directly affect and disadvantage women.

The European chapter focuses on the challenges we face from rapid social and economic change. Reforming the social dimension is essential if we are to deliver our shared goals of social justice and inclusion in this expanded global market.

Undoubtedly there is more to do. Poverty and social exclusion are deep-rooted problems that have built up over many years.

Tackling the root causes of poverty, as well as ameliorating it, takes time as well as commitment and investment. It also requires a partnership across all sectors of society which recognises that rights and responsibilities go hand in hand. However, this report shows that we are now starting to see real signs of equally deep-rooted and lasting change that will help individuals and communities take control of their lives and break the intergenerational cycle of poverty and deprivation.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 18 October 2005

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Judicial Appointments Commission

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): My noble Friend the Secretary of State has made the following written ministerial statement:

"I am pleased to announce that Her Majesty the Queen has appointed Baroness Prashar of Runnymede as the first Chairman of the Judicial Appointments Commission.

The appointment is for a period of five years in the first instance, and will expire in September 2009. Baroness Prashar has a distinguished record of public service, and I am sure her appointment will be widely welcomed.

Her appointment marks a further significant step in setting up a transparent and robust method of appointing judges in England and Wales".

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Government Indemnity Scheme

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Mr. David Lammy): The provision for the Government Indemnity Scheme is made by the National Heritage Act 1980. The scheme facilitates public access to loans of works of art and other objects for public display made to museums, galleries and other such institutions by private owners and non-national institutions. It does this by indemnifying lenders against loss or damage to their loan. Loans covered by the scheme must be for public benefit. The scheme also covers loans of such objects for study purposes within borrowing institutions where this would contribute materially to the public's understanding or appreciation of the loan. Examples of this are enhancing interpretation or explanation to the public of objects, or bringing into the public domain the conclusions of any study.

In the six month period ended 31 March 2005, the following undertakings to indemnify were given under section 16 by the relevant Departments for objects on loan to national and non-national institutions. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport issued 970 undertakings, the Scottish Executive Education Department issued 186 undertakings and the National Assembly for Wales issued 159. This made a total of 1315 undertakings given under section 16. The Museums Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) issued a total number of 64 undertakings to non-nationals.

The value of contingent liabilities in respect of undertakings given at any time under section 16 and which remained outstanding as at 31 March 2005 for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport are £1,773,389,217.55. The value of section 16 contingent liabilities as at 31 March 2005 for the Scottish Executive Education Department are £656,814,466.00 and £80,350,537.00 for the National Assembly for Wales. The total value of contingent liabilities issued by MLA to non-nationals is £978,419,161.00

The value of non-statutory Undertakings given to Her Majesty in respect of loans from the Royal Collection and which remained outstanding as at 31 March 2005 are £133,424,160.00, £32,494,000.00 for the Scottish Executive Education Department and £4,720,000.00 for non-national museums issued by the MLA.

The grand total value of loans out by national institutions and to non-national institutions as remained outstanding at 31 March 2005 is £1,052,080,325.76.

DEFENCE

Chaplains (Armed Forces)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Don Touhig): In his written ministerial statement of 7 December 2004, my predecessor announced our intention to appoint the first chaplains to the Armed Forces from the Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh faith communities. These are the faiths, other than Christian, that are most represented in the Armed Forces.

Following a national recruitment campaign earlier this year, I am delighted to announce that chaplains from the Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh faith communities have now been appointed. These chaplains will be employed as Ministry of Defence civil servants, but will be fully integrated members of the existing Service Chaplaincy organisation.

I am confident that their presence will contribute enormously to encouraging and promoting religious understanding and acceptance within the Armed Forces, and that they will provide comfort, support and valuable advice to individual service personnel who share their faith.

Details of the new chaplains will be released both internally and externally once they take up their fall formal duties following completion of a short period of induction and familiarisation training, during which they will learn about the Armed Forces and the work of the Service Chaplaincy organisation.

HEALTH

NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Jane Kennedy): The NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency's annual business plan has been published today and copies have been placed in the Library.

The business plan highlights the Agency's achievements in 2004–05 and sets out the key tasks and targets for the coming year.

This comprehensive plan has been formulated within the context of the Agency's ongoing remit to lead the modernisation of the National Health Service purchasing and supply function and the arms length body review and the supply chain excellence programme. The Agency will undertake a stronger and more focused role in all areas critical to the delivery of NHS purchasing and supplies. The business plan sets out clearly how the Agency will achieve these aims.

Primary Care Trusts/Strategic Health Authorities

The Secretary of State for Health (Ms Patricia Hewitt): National Health Service spending is rising from £33 billion in 1997–98 to over £90 billion in 2007–08. This increased investment, together with reform and dedicated work by NHS staff, is transforming our hospitals, with reduced waiting times and lists, improved accident and emergency services and more up-to-date buildings and equipment.

Some 90 per cent., of people's contact with the NHS is in primary care and the challenge now is to improve primary and community services. It is better for patients and taxpayers if long-term conditions like diabetes and heart disease and care for our ageing population—the big challenges facing the NHS in the 21st century—are dealt with in the local community, rather than in hospitals.

The focus of services needs to shift more towards prevention, moving more services—like diagnostics, minor operations and other treatments—out of hospital wherever it is safe and effective to do so, and ensuring all communities get the services they need. We need to continue to reduce administrative costs, releasing further resources for frontline care.

This needs stronger primary care trusts to design, plan and develop better services for patients, to work more closely with local government, and more effectively to hold hospitals and general practitioners (GPs) to account. GPs should also play a more effective role in developing better services for patients and be more accountable to their local communities for spending taxpayers' money. That is why the Government are rolling out "practice-based commissioning", which will ensure that GPs help deliver better local services for patients. It will also deliver better value for money as GPs help patients avoid going into hospital unnecessarily, and spend the money they save on improving community services, including preventative measures.

To take this agenda forward in a planned way, with manageable timescales, "Commissioning a Patient-led NHS" was published on 28 July. Its purpose was to streamline strategic health authorities, strengthen primary care trusts and engage GPs with practice-based commissioning—all in the cause of improving services to patients. Rather than impose change from the centre, we asked SHAs to submit local proposals for consultation to the Department by 15 October. We asked them to work with local people and stakeholders, including honourable and right honourable members. The proposals have now been received, and are being analysed against the criteria set out by the NHS Chief Executive (Sir Nigel Crisp) on 28 July:

- securing high-quality, safe services for patients;
- improving health and reducing inequalities;
- improving the engagement of GPs;
- improving public involvement;
- improving co-ordination with social services through greater "co-terminosity" of PCT and local government boundaries;
- effective use of resources.

On 26 August, the Department sent a letter to all SHA chief executives stressing that proposals should consider the context of local health needs, and that different solutions from different SHAs would be encouraged, as long as they were justifiable against the above criteria. He also stressed the need to engage local stakeholders and partner organisations from the outset.

An external panel representing key interests has been established to advise Ministers on whether the proposals meet the criteria. The panel is chaired by Michael O'Higgins, managing partner and member of the international board of PA Consulting Group. Members include:

- Jane Barrie, Chair of the SHA Chairs;
- Peter Mount, Chair, NHS Confederation;
- Joan Saddler, Chair, Waltham Forest PCT;
- Harry Cayton, national director for patients and the public, Departmentof Health;
- David Colin-Thome, national director for primary care, Department of Health;
- Jennifer Dixon, Director of Policy, King's Fund;
- Liz Fradd, Chief Executive, Nurse Directors' Association;
- Ara Darzi, Imperial College;
- David Henshaw, Chief Executive, Liverpool City Council.

After this consideration, any proposals for changes to PCT boundaries will then go out for a three month statutory consultation to all local stakeholders and staff interests. This consultation will begin in early December 2005. No decisions on future local configurations will be taken until after this full statutory local consultation has been completed.

Changes to SHAs will precede changes to PCTs and any changes to the latter will not commence before April 2006. Any changes to PCTs' role in providing services will take place over a longer timescale and will be subject to consultation in the usual way. Any such changes will build on the results of the forthcoming White Paper on "Community Health and Social Care Services", based on the current listening exercise, "Your Health, Your Care, Your Say". Staff will be fully involved in deciding new arrangements and identifying which services will be best for patients. Any staff transferring to a new employer will, of course, be entitled to appropriate legal protection of their terms and conditions of employment. The social partnership forum have decided to set up a working group led by NHS employers to fully engage all trade unions in all workforce issues arising from the commissioning a patient-led NHS change programme.

A chronology of the CPLNHS programme, and a list the relevant key documents, has been placed in the Library.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Controls on Smoking (Northern Ireland)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Shaun Woodward): This statement sets out my intention to introduce comprehensive measures to protect all workers and the public from the dangers of passive smoking and second-hand smoke in workplaces and in all enclosed public places in Northern Ireland including all pubs and all bars.

On 28 June I announced my intention to introduce partial controls throughout Northern Ireland on where people smoke. I also indicated that, over the coming months, I would decide whether to go further and extend controls on where people smoke in all workplaces.

To help inform my decision I made fact-finding visits to Dublin and New York where controls had already been introduced to assess the benefits to public health and the impact of controls on businesses, especially the hospitality industry.

The messages from both visits were similar. Both impressed upon me the improvements that have been made to the protection of public health for the general public and employees by controlling where people smoke.

The Department had already carried out a major consultation exercise between December 2004 and March 2005. This elicited 70,823 responses to questions about strengthening existing controls on tobacco use. 91.18 per cent. of respondents expressed support for comprehensive controls similar to those already in place in the Republic of Ireland. These controls will also be introduced in Scotland next year.

Trade Unions (with one exception) in Northern Ireland all supported the move to prohibit people from smoking in all workplaces and all enclosed public spaces. In addition organisations such as the Health and Social Services Boards, the BMA, local councils and the voluntary sector have made strong representations to the Department for a complete ban on smoking in all public places and workplaces to protect public health.

There is strong cross-party support for a complete ban from the majority of MLAs (Alliance, DUP, the SDLP, Sinn Fein and the Ulster Unionists all registering their support).

The proposals will be issued for consultation in the New Year.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Windfarm (Little Cheyne Court)

The Minister for Energy (Malcolm Wicks): The Government have today given consent under section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 to Npower Renewables Ltd's application to build 26 turbines with a capacity of up to 78 MW, at Little Cheyne Court, near Dungeness,

Following objections by the relevant local planning authorities, the Government held a public inquiry into the application and appointed Clive Richardson, an Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate to preside over it. Mr Richardson recommended the application be granted.

The decision to grant consent was taken after extensive and thorough consideration of the representations received, both for and against consent being granted. The extensive, independent public inquiry ensured that community and environmental concerns were heard.

We are aware that this decision will come as a disappointment to those local people who opposed the application. Conversely, the decision will be welcomed by those local people who supported the application. Today's approval takes into account the concerns raised, and includes a number of conditions recommended by the inquiry Inspector to mitigate any impacts.

This wind farm will generate clean, renewable electricity and make a vital contribution towards reducing carbon emissions and meeting the UK's international obligations on tackling climate change.

Copies of the decision letter have been placed in the Library of the House.

National Minimum Wage

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Mr. Gerry Sutcliffe): I am pleased to announce that the Government wrote to the Low Pay Commission on 14 October setting out our non-economic evidence on the national minimum wage.

The evidence outlines the Government's view on the following issues:

- Accommodation Offset
- Salary Sacrifice Schemes
- The Older Workers Development Rate
- Apprentices by age
- Enforcement

The evidence has been placed in the Libraries of the House and will also be available on my Department's website at www.dti.gov.uk.

TRANSPORT

Rail Franchising

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Alistair Darling): The Future of Rail White Paper (Command Paper 6233), published in July 2004, announced our intention to consider how rail passenger franchises could be best aligned with Network Rail's regional and route structure.

On the 19 October 2004, I announced that, following expiry of the current Central Trains franchise, the existing services would be distributed amongst other train operators in the region. This change is designed to improve the efficiency and performance of the railways, achieving savings through economies of scale and improving service to customers. Since then, much work has been done, in consultation with the rail industry, to determine the most appropriate way of achieving these objectives.

I am today announcing the new structure of rail franchises which will be implemented. The structure incorporates market-based groups of services with an operational focus, which are better aligned to Network Rail's routes in order to encourage joint working between track and train. Three new franchises will replace four existing franchises.

East Midlands, which will operate services to and from London St Pancras together with regional and local services in the East Midlands.

West Midlands, will operate the West Coast Main Line outer suburban services to and from London Euston (currently operated by Silverlink County) together with regional and local services in the West Midlands.

A new Cross Country franchise will be created. The existing franchise, operatedby Virgin Rail Group under temporary arrangements with DfT Rail, will now bere-let in Autumn 2007.

The expiry dates of the current Central Trains and Silverlink franchises will be extended to autumn 2007. This allows time for the development of detailed specifications for the new franchises and for full competitive procurement to take place.

There will be an option to transfer the Liverpool to Nottingham service to the TransPennine Express franchise if this demonstrates better value for money. There will also be an option to transfer the services to and from Birmingham Snow Hill to Chiltern Railways, if this, too, can demonstrate better value for money.

Detailed discussions are taking place regarding the possible transfer to Transport for London of the London inner-suburban services operated by Silverlink Metro.

I shall keep the House informed of further developments as we continue to implement the proposals set out in the White Paper.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Draft Occupational Pension Schemes

The Minister for Pensions Reform (Mr. Stephen Timms): I am pleased to announce that on 9 September 2005, the Department for Work and Pensions published a consultation document containing draft Occupational Pensions Schemes (Disclosure of Information) regulations 2006.

The draft Regulations introduce a requirement that annual benefit information for non money-purchase benefits is provided automatically. This proposal was originally included in the June 2003 Command Paper "Simplicity, Security and Choice: Working and Saving for Retirement" (Cm 5835).

The draft Regulations also establish a new approach to disclosure, replacing the rigid timescales of the current disclosure regime with a simple requirement that information be furnished within a reasonable period. These changes reflect recommendations made by Alan Pickering in his report, "A simpler way to better pensions" published in July 2002. The Pensions Regulator is also simultaneously consulting on a corresponding Code of Practice regarding views on what constitutes a reasonable period.

These Regulations will ensure that scheme members get important automatic information about their non-money purchase pensions, assisting them to make informed choices about the adequacy of their overall retirement provision.

The consultation period is 9 September 2005 to 2 December 2005. A summary of responses, including the next steps will be published by 17 February 2006.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 19 October 2005

TREASURY

ECOFIN

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Gordon Brown): On 11 October I chaired the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN) in Luxembourg. The Paymaster General, right hon. Dawn Primarolo MP, represented the UK.

The Presidency expressed the Council's sympathy, solidarity and support to all those affected by the terrible earthquake which hit south Asia earlier this month, and the willingness as a community and as national Governments to provide assistance as required to alleviate the consequences of this humanitarian disaster and assist reconstruction.

The Council took note of the Commission's intention to propose the next step in Hungary's Excessive Deficit Procedure in due time for the 8 November ECOFIN meeting.

The Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB) briefed the Council on progress in developing EU support for the economic regeneration of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, in cooperation with other countries and institutions working in the region.

The Commission reported on progress towards the implementation of the June EU-US Summit Economic Declaration. The Presidency, supported by the forthcoming Austrian and Finnish Presidencies, concluded that there was broad support for closer EU-US economic cooperation and that ECOFIN would return to the issue ahead of the 2006 EU-US summit.

The Commission briefed the Council on its sectoral inquiries into possible obstacles to competition in the financial services and energy markets.

Council Conclusions were agreed on the Commission's Green Paper Financial Services Policy (2005–10). Member States reached consensus on the need for effective implementation and enforcement of current measures, the importance of recognising the global nature of financial markets, the need to embed better regulation principles into financial services policy moving forward, as well as the growing importance of non-legislative instruments, such as competition policy, in future policy-making.

The chairmen of the Committee of European Securities Regulators (CESR), the Committee of European Insurance and Occupational Pension Supervisors (CEIOPS) and the Committee of the European Banking Supervisors (CEBS), briefed the Council on the work they are undertaking to improve the quality of European financial legislation, and cooperation between supervisors, underlining their commitment to the better regulation agenda.

HEALTH

Specialist Services

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Mr. Liam Byrne): My noble Friend the Minister of State (Lord Warner) has made the following written ministerial statement today.

I am today setting up a review aimed at helping the National Health Service plan and pay for specialised services which include some of the most expensive treatments and drugs provided in the NHS. Patients expect to experience equal access to specialised services in the NHS and it may be necessary to strengthen collective commissioning arrangements between primary care trusts.

The new taskforce, headed by Scotland's former Chief Medical Officer Professor Sir David Carter, will investigate how the NHS currently commissions specialised services and consider ways of tightening these commissioning arrangements so that there is greater consistency across the NHS. The review will also look at ways of ensuring primary care trusts work together to commission specialised services so that the financial risk is shared. It will consider whether the balance is right between PCT commissioning collaboration and a more national or regional commissioning approach. The review team will report to Ministers in Spring 2006.

Health and Social Care Regulation

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Jane Kennedy): The Department has started a wide-ranging review of the regulatory framework for the health and social care sector. This review was announced by the Chancellor in the Budget Report in March 2005, as part of the Government's overall strategy to rationalise the number of public services inspectorates.

The review will be conducted by officials from the Department, with external scrutiny and challenge provided by a regulation review panel, chaired by Lord Currie of Marylebone, Dr Dieter Helm of New College Oxford, and Mr Robert Chilton, acting chair of the National Consumers Council.

The terms of reference for the review are:

(a) to define our objectives for regulation and inspection in health and social care, striking the right balance between the need to streamline regulation, while ensuring proper stewardship of public funds, and quality and safety in services for patients, users and the public;

(b) to examine the functions needed to achieve these objectives, taking account of current and forthcoming changes in the health and social care sectors, including:

(i) changes in the role and organisations of local councils;

(ii) the streamlining of strategic health authorities and primary care trusts;

(iii) the provision of greater choice and plurality within health,

(iv) payment by results and the price tariff;

(v) the future direction of travel for policy on social care for adults.

(c) to review the experience here and in other sectors, and from abroad, and identify predictors of success for added value from regulatory systems

(d) to identify where changes might have the greatest impact on frontline staff; and improve the assurances for users and the general public;

(e) to put forward proposals for the form in which these functions can be mosteffectivelydischarged, taking account of the wider implications of the health and social care systems.

A further update on progress will be made early in the New Year.

Influenza Contingency Plan

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Ms Rosie Winterton): Today the Chief Medical Officer has launched a revised contingency plan for dealing with a possible influenza pandemic. While it is not possible, to predict with any degree of certainty when the next influenza pandemic may happen, this plan outlines our updated strategy for dealing with it when it does. This plan will help to ensure that we have a coherent and joined up response once a pandemic unfolds.

The United Kingdom has had a plan for dealing with a flu pandemic in place since 1997. This plan has been regularly updated to reflect changing circumstances, and has been supported by practical action with the commitment of just under £200 million for the procurement of a stockpile of antiviral drugs, which will be complete by September 2006. We are also working closely with manufacturers to ensure that the UK will be able to obtain a pandemic vaccine when one becomes available.

The key objectives of the UK contingency plans are to ensure that the country is as prepared as possible to meet the threat of a pandemic through:

the establishment of a strong surveillance and alert system;

containing any incidence of infection in order to reduce illness and deaths, once a pandemic occurs;

ensuring the continuation of essential services to minimise social and economic disruption during a pandemic; and

ensuring that the public, health professionals and media have up-to-date, comprehensive information.

We are fortunate in having some of the best scientific and medical experts in the world leading our work on pandemic preparations, and the World Health Organisation (WHO) has already identified the UK as one of the best prepared countries in the world. But we are not taking this for granted and have continued to work to ensure that our contingency planning is as up to date and comprehensive as possible.

The UK contingency plan has been revised on the basis of comments received from international experts and health professionals and to bring it into line with recent developments nationally and internationally, for example developments in mathematical modelling, and the revised WHO pandemic phases.

To support these changes, operational guidance has been published to help NHS planners in preparing for a pandemic. Clinical management guidelines are being developed with the Health Protection Agency and the British Thoracic Society, and Infection control guidelines are also being finalised.

These latest revisions to the plan demonstrate that we are continuing to step up our preparations. While we cannot prevent a pandemic occurring, we are continuing to keep our contingency planning under review to consider what further measures should be taken in order to ensure that the country is as prepared as possible to meet it, when it does.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Identity Cards

The Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality (Mr. Tony McNulty): The Home Office Identity Cards Programme will publish today "Procurement Strategy Market Sounding" documents.

These documents support an exercise for gaining input and views from the supply market to validate the emerging procurement strategy for Identity Cards. This is to help ensure that once legislation has been passed, an effective and competitive procurement can be conducted.

This activity is in no way prejudging the outcome of the Parliamentary process. It is however right to conduct this exercise now so that the Home Office is prepared for the process of implementing Identity Cards without undue delay once Royal Assent is granted.

Copies will be available in the Libraries of the House and in electronic format on the Identity Cards Programme website www.identitycards.gov.uk.

Code of Practice for Victims of Crime

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Fiona Mactaggart): The Government is laying the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime before Parliament today. The Code of Practice is part of the Government's programme of work to offer better support and advice to victims of crime and their families.

The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 gave the Home Secretary the power to issue a Code of Practice setting out the minimum services victims of crime can expect to receive from each criminal justice agency. Following a consultation exercise earlier this year, a final version of the Code of Practice has been produced.

The Code of Practice is being published today and it will come into force in April 2006. After April 2006, victims will be able to appeal, ultimately to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, if they feel that they have not received the level of service set out in the Code.

Copies of the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime have been placed in the House Library.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Independent Monitoring Commission

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Peter Hain): I have received the Seventh Report of the Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC). This report has been made under Articles 4 and 7 of the International Agreement that established the Commission and it reports on levels of paramilitary activity in Northern Ireland.

I have considered the content of the report and I am today bringing it before Parliament. I have placed copies in the Library of the House.

The report concludes that the PIRA statement, despite coming at a point when five sixths of the period under review had elapsed, is 'very significant'. The statement and the act of decommissioning reported by the IICD on 26 September have created a platform for future progress and 'initial signs following the PIRA statement are encouraging'. However, it is essential that the IMC, as they state, are able to observe 'cumulative changes in behaviour over a more sustained period of time . . . '. I await the next report of the Commission, due in January 2006.

In the meantime I have decided to restore Sinn Fein's Assembly allowances, with effect from 1 November, and will, in due course, recommend to the House that it lifts the suspension of allowances to Sinn Fein Members of Parliament, which took effect on 1 April this year.

The report also concludes that paramilitaries, especially Loyalists and dissident Republicans, continue to exert a malign influence over communities which has obstructed the development of a 'culture of lawfulness'. As I said in my Statement to Parliament on 14 October, it has taken a long time for the Republican movement to acknowledge that violence does not pay but it has now publicly done so. Loyalist paramilitaries must now also realise that exclusively peaceful and democratic means represent the sole way forward.

Once again, I am grateful to the Commission for their submission of this report and for its careful analysis.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Health Strategy (Working-age People)

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. David Blunkett): My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health and I have today published a paper "Health, Work and Wellbeing—Caring for our Future. A strategy for the health and wellbeing of working age people". The report has been placed in the Library and copies are available for hon. Members in the Vote Office.

With a 10 per cent. reduction in accidents at work since 1997, the UK today has one of the best health and safety records in the world. Yet 40 million working days are still lost every year to occupational ill health and injury, and a third of those coming onto incapacity benefit come from work.

In a modern world where rising dependency ratios and global market forces place an ever greater burden on those of working age in supporting others for the sake of the individual and their family, and for the well-being of our overall economy, we cannot afford to stand back and allow those with moderate health or disability challenges, to be written off.

This strategy is a crucial part of delivering on the Government's commitment to improving the health and well-being of the working age population. This is a central element of our wider welfare reform agenda and is set out in the White Paper: "Choosing Health: Making Healthier Choices Easier". It helps to make a reality of the Health and Safety Commission's Strategy for Workplace Health and Safety.

Underpinned by a ground-breaking partnership between my department (including the Health and Safety Commission/Executive) and the Department of Health—this strategy will enable us to work with all our partners across and outside Government to take the first steps in breaking the link between ill-health and inactivity. It will advance the prevention of ill-health and injury, encourage good management of occupational health, and transform opportunities for people to recover from illness while at work, maintaining their independence and their sense of worth.

This is an ambitious agenda—far more stretching than any commitments of previous Governments and more wide-ranging—placing responsibility not just in the hands of Government, but with employers, individuals, the healthcare profession and all our stakeholders. It will be led by a new national Director for Occupational Health and include the creation of a National Charter for Health, Work and Wellbeing, setting out the contribution of all stakeholders in delivering this transformation in occupational health.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 20 October 2005

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

British Nationals Abroad

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): Falling sick, being a victim of crime or facing an emergency are traumatic events under any circumstances. When such problems happen abroad they can be even more difficult and frightening. So there is no more important task for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) than its work to support British nationals in distress overseas.

British people now make some 65 million overseas trips a year, and some 13 million British nationals live overseas. Those numbers continue to increase, not least due to cheaper and easier travel and trade and the increasing diversity of our own societies.

Thankfully, the vast majority of British nationals who travel and live abroad do so without serious difficulty. However, a number of factors have led over the past years to a steady increase in demand for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's consular assistance to British nationals in difficulty. Among these factors are the growth in travel and especially in independent travel to more exotic and sometimes dangerous destinations; an increase in trips by more vulnerable groups such as the elderly; the rise of international terrorism; and the increasing number of British nationals caught up in natural catastrophes around the world such as the Indian Ocean tsunami or the recent hurricanes in the United States.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has worked hard over the past years to respond to these challenges. Rapid deployment teams are on stand-by to provide support in crises affecting British nationals around the world: they now include the first new regional teams, based in Hong Kong, which were deployed only a week after their launch to deal with British victims of the terrorist atrocities in Bali on 1 October. The FCO in London has greatly expanded the capacity of its 24-hour response centre to deal with such crises. We have reviewed and implemented changes to our Travel Advice to help people better make informed decisions about their safety overseas. We are ensuring that all our staff overseas have the right training in crisis management, and working more closely with organisations such as the police and the Red Cross.

British consular staff now deal with some 3.5 million enquiries and some 85,000 new cases requiring more acute support every year. Over the last year they included some 4,200 British nationals hospitalised overseas; 3,900 deaths; around 150 cases of child abduction and 250 of forced marriage; and support to almost 6,000 British detainees. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office issues travel advice notices on 217 countries and territories: our travel advice website receives 400,000 visitors a month. Our call centre receives some 8,000 calls every month, with flexible arrangements in place quickly to increase capacity to deal with major crises. FCO posts overseas issue over 450,000 full British passports every year, plus 11,500 emergency passports. Foreign Office staff also provide specific services such as the Hajj delegation to assist British pilgrims to the Holy places of the Islamic faith, and special deployments for major sporting events abroad.

In its manifesto for the last general election, the Government committed themselves, if elected, to consulting widely before drawing up a comprehensive statement of the consular assistance which the Foreign and Commonwealth Office can provide to British travellers and residents in difficulty overseas. Such a comprehensive guide to this support has not previously been available in a single document.

By consulting our stakeholders before the formal launch of the document, we hope to achieve two main objectives:

> To ensure that we present this guide to our consular assistance in the best way possible. Our aim is to raise public awareness of what support our consular staff can offer to British nationals in difficulty overseas, and of the constraints on that help imposed for example by the very different conditions in which we operate around the world;
>
> To foster a wider debate on the questions underlying our services. For example, to what extent should public money be used to help those who have got into difficulty abroad, including those who have not taken out appropriate insurance? How can we help British travellers and residents overseas better protect themselves against things going wrong?

I am today making available to stakeholders—including representatives from the travel and insurance industries, non-governmental organisations, Departments across Government and organisations with whom we work to deliver consular assistance—a draft text of the guide, in preparation for a consultative event to be held at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 27 October. I am also placing copies of the text in the Libraries of both Houses and in the Vote Office. Members who would like further copies, or who wish to attend the 27 October event, should contact Katey Ma in the Consular Directorate, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London SW1A 2PA; katey.ma@fco.gov.uk or telephone 020 7008 1213.

I would above all welcome the views of noble Lords and of right hon. and hon. Members, all of whom will have a number of consular issues amongst their constituency caseloads, on the issues raised in this statement. Comments from right hon. and hon. Members should be sent to me at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Following the consultation I hope to make a further statement to the House to launch the final text.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Animal Procedures Committee

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Andy Burnham): In accordance with Section 20(5) of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, I have placed the Committee's annual report

for 2004 in the Library today. Among other things the report includes; changes agreed to the types of applications to be referred to the Committee for advice; the Home Office's responses to some of the Committee's completed reports—on the use of Primates and on "Overbreeding"; progress by several working groups taking forward work that the Home Office has commissioned, including on humane euthanasia techniques, statistics of the use of animals and suffering and severity; progress on subjects that the Committee has identified as deserving of study—on Cephalopods; on lessons to be learnt from the BUAV allegations about primate use at Cambridge University and on the batch testing of botulinum toxin; and the results of research projects funded by the Home Office on the Committee's advice.

National Offender Management Service

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Fiona Mactaggart): I am announcing today the publication of a consultation paper setting out the Government's proposals for restructuring probation to reduce re-offending.

In January 2004, the Government published "Reducing Crime—Changing Lives" which set out our strategy for improving the effectiveness of the criminal justice system and the correctional services in particular. The National Offender Management Service was established in June 2004 with the aim of reducing re-offending through more consistent and effective offender management. Since then a considerable amount has been achieved and this momentum needs to be maintained. The Government therefore propose to introduce commissioning and contestability into the provision of probation services to drive up standards further amongst existing providers and to enable new providers to deliver services where they can do so more effectively. The consultation paper seeks views on how we propose to do this.

Copies of the consultation paper will be placed in the House Library.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

New Member Briefing Sessions

The Leader of the House of Commons (Mr. Geoffrey Hoon): Following a request from the hon. Member for Eastleigh (Chris Huhne) in a written question, to which I replied on 18 July 2005, *Official Report*, Column 1281W, I agreed to facilitate the setting up of briefing sessions on the work of Government Departments for new Members of Parliament.

The range of dates provided by Departments for the briefing sessions are as follows:

Cabinet Office (15 Nov, 24 Jan 06, 28 Feb 06),

Department for Constitutional Affairs (1 Nov, 8 Nov, 22 Nov, 6 Dec),

Department for Culture, Media and Sports (10 Jan 06, 24 Jan 06, 7 Feb 06),

Ministry of Defence (29 Nov, 24 Jan 06, 14 Mar 06),

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (31 Jan 06, 14 Feb 06, 14 Mar 06),

Department for Education and Skills (29 Nov, 14 Feb 06, 21 Mar 06),

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (24 Jan 06),

Home Office (1 Nov, 15 Nov, 29 Nov).

Department for International Development (11 Nov, 29 Nov, 6 Dec),

Law Officers (29 Nov, 31 Jan 06, 7 Mar 06),

Northern Ireland Office (10 Nov, 15 Nov, 11 Jan 06, 12 Jan 06, 26 Jan 06, 1 Feb 06, 2 Feb 06, 9 Feb 06),

Department of Trade and Industry (15 Nov, 13 Dec, 17 Jan 06),

Department for Transport (10 Jan 06, 7 Feb 06, 7 Mar 06) and

Office of the Secretary of State for Wales (15 Nov, 24 Jan 06, 7 Mar 06).

Any Member wishing to attend is asked to make contact directly with the relevant Department. A list of contact details for each Department, and other information, has been placed in the Library.

Due to the nature of their work, some Departments have arranged for the briefings to be themed around specific aspects of their work. These themes are included on the list of further information.

Some Departments are not listed because they have already held briefing sessions for new Members of Parliament. Members wishing to be briefed on the work of a Government Department or agency not specified on the list should contact the relevant Minister's office directly.

I have made arrangements to ensure that similar briefings will be offered following future general elections.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Pension Credit

The Minister for Pensions Reform (Mr. Stephen Timms): I have today placed in the Library the latest quarterly progress report on pension credit, with figures to the end of June. The report gives the number of households and individuals receiving pension credit overall, broken down by guarantee credit and savings credit and by Government office region and parliamentary constituency.

The total number of households receiving pension credit at 30 June 2005 was just over 2.7 million, or around 3.29 million individuals. The average weekly award is now £43.63.

The figures show that there were 2.1 million households, or 2.50 million individuals, getting pension credit guarantee awards as at 30 June.

Some 2.05 million households, or 2.49 million individuals, are getting more money as a direct result of pension credit. The average level of weekly gain shared by these households is £20.26.

Copies of the report are available for hon. Members in the Vote Office.

Written Ministerial Statements

Friday 21 October 2005

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Higher Education Students (Loans and Grants)

The Minister for Higher Education and Lifelong Learning (Bill Rammell): The level of support available to full-time students in the academic year 2006–07 will generally be 2.5 per cent., higher than for 2005–06, in line with forecast price increases. Students entering full-time higher education in 2006–07 will be eligible for a new grant of up to £2,700. For all full-time students, the basic student loans for living costs have been increased above the rate of inflation so that they will match the median of students' basic living costs as established by the 2002–03 Student Income and Expenditure Survey. All full-time students will be eligible for loans towards their fees, and will repay these loans after they have graduated, rather than up-front.

In 2006–07, the maximum fee grant available for low-income part-time undergraduates will increase to £1,500 FTE from £1,180 FTE in 2005–06; an increase of 27 per cent. As in 2005–06, a banding system will apply and the three levels of fee grant introduced in the current year will be retained. A £250 course grant towards the costs of studying will also be retained.

I am placing two Memoranda in the Library giving details of the new loan, grant and fee rates for 2006–07. Those rates set out in Memorandum 1 will be incorporated in the Education (Student Support) Regulations 2006, which will cover support for eligible students under the current arrangements. Those set out in Memorandum 2 will be incorporated in the Education (Mandatory Awards) Amendment Regulations 2006 and the Education (Student Loans) Amendment Regulations 2006, which will cover the extremely small number of students who in 2006–07 will still be receiving awards and loans under the pre-1998 arrangements. These regulations will all be laid before Parliament in due course.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agriculture and Fisheries Council

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): The European Union Agriculture and Fisheries Council will meet in Luxembourg on 24 and 25 October 2005. I will chair the agriculture items with my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Ben Bradshaw, in the UK seat. Ben Bradshaw will chair the fisheries items with my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Jim Knight, in the UK seat.

The Council will start at 11am on Monday with the fisheries items on the agenda: "Recovery measures for Southern Hake and Norway lobster stocks", where we hope to reach political agreement, and the "EU/ Norway fisheries agreement" where ministers will hold an exchange of views on the agreement.

The Fisheries Commissioner will then update the Council on the establishment of Regional Advisory Councils.

Ben Bradshaw will host a lunch at which Fisheries Ministers will discuss ideas for improving Council working methods with regard to the annual agreement of Total Allowable Catches and Fishing Quotas.

After lunch, the Council will vote on whether to reject a Greek ban on the marketing of 17 varieties of genetically modified maize seeds. There will also be a vote on Commission proposals for authorisations of the use of maize varieties GA21 and MON 863 in food.

The Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection will give an update on the recent outbreak of avian influenza in Romania, Greece and Turkey. He will also present a report on the review of the Animal By-products Regulation.

The Council will then consider the proposal for Forest Law, Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT), where we hope to reach political agreement. The proposal would introduce measures to tackle illegal logging.

The Agriculture Commissioner will follow with a presentation of her Communication on simplification and better regulation of agriculture policy.

The Council will take an AOB point on the definition of shallots at the request of the French.

On Tuesday, the Council will hold a policy debate on the Commission's proposals on reform of the sugar regime. The discussion will focus on the following points:

- the functioning of the restructuring fund;
- the Presidency's suggested revisions to the legal text; and
- any improvements Ministers wish to see to the Commission's proposal.

There will be a lunch at which the Agriculture Commissioner will provide an update on WTO agricultural negotiations.

In the margins of the Council I will hold a series of trilateral meetings with the Commission and those Member State Ministers whom I was not able to see at the last Council meeting, to discuss sugar reform.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

British Council Art Exhibitions

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): The British Council, although not a Government Department, receives a substantial grant-in-aid from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The Council regularly organises or sponsors exhibitions overseas of works of art loaned from

national galleries and private collections in the United Kingdom. It provides certain assurances or guarantees in respect of loss or damage while these works are on loan.

In the six months ending on 30 September 2005, the British Council provided such assurances to 15 national lenders and undertakings to 79 private lenders. The value of the contingent liabilities outstanding on 30 September 2005 in respect of private lenders was £14,758,122. In respect of national lenders it was £24,676,000.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Stephen Lawrence Steering Group

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Clarke): Earlier this year, I asked my officials to carry out a review of race advisory panels within the Home Office to ensure that we are getting the most effective advice. The review recommended we move away from Standing Committees to a project-based approach, in which groups with relevant perspectives, community links and expertise are brought together to offer advice on specific issues within timescales that help us to deliver change quickly.

I have therefore stood down the Stephen Lawrence Steering Group and am establishing a number of project groups to take forward this work. Many of the members of the Stephen Lawrence Steering Group will be involved in projects.

The first set of new projects will include:

(i) Building relations between services, including the police service and prisons, and ethnic minority communities.

(ii) Reaching out to young people who are disengaged and disadvantaged from black and minority ethnic groups.

(iii) How to increase the number of black and minority ethnic staff at senior levels in public services—in particular police chief constables.

As part of our cross Whitehall leadership role we have also identified two areas where we could work with other Government Departments:

(iv) Race and homelessness (in partnership with ODPM)

(v) Encouraging, supporting and growing BME businesses (in partnership with the DTI).

The project groups will involve leading practitioners, business leaders, academics and professionals. I want to make sure in particular that we engage young people in this process. Existing projects which are sponsored by the Home Office in consultation with Race Advisory Panels are: Stop and Search, Racist Incidents, the Police Race and Diversity Learning and Development Board, the Naturalisation and Integration Advisory Board, Drugs and Prisons will continue.

The Lawrence Steering Group (LSG) was set up in 1999 to oversee progress and advise on the implementation of the 70 recommendations from the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report. With the advice and support of its members, the majority of the 70 recommendations have been implemented. Those that are outstanding are being actioned by the relevant departments to ensure compliance with the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report.

I am grateful to the work of all those who have been members of the Lawrence Steering Group, and recognise in particular the tireless and significant contributions of Doreen and Neville Lawrence. The work of the Stephen Lawrence Steering Group has been central to the very real progress which has been made in the criminal justice system and especially in the police service, in combating racism and giving better service to all communities. The name of Stephen Lawrence will continue to be a driving force for change in race relations and elimination of race discrimination.

The work of increasing the responsiveness of the criminal justice system, policing to the needs of citizens and of making them truly representative of the communities they serve is far from complete. More needs to be done to intensify the focus on race and address the issues that are pertinent to building the trust and confidence between the black and minority ethnic communities and the police service and criminal justice system.

These changes in the way that we work on issues, in no way represents a lessening of the Governments commitment to the race equality agenda. There are now clearer lines of accountability for the projects through Cabinet. Earlier this year, I reaffirmed our commitment to race equality in the police service in my response to the CRE's inquiry into racism in the police service, and I do the same again now.

The 6th and final annual report of the Stephen Lawrence Steering Group is to be published on 27 October and I will arrange for copies to be placed in the Library of the House. I will also shortly publish a report carried out on behalf of the Home Office by the London School of Economics into the effect of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry on policing. Again, I shall place copies in the Library.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Acceptance of Pleas and the Prosecutor's Pledge

The Solicitor-General (Mr. Mike O'Brien): My right hon. Friend the Attorney-General has made the following written ministerial statement:

"The purpose of this ministerial statement is to inform the House that I am today publishing my revised Guidelines on acceptance of pleas and the prosecutors' role in the sentencing exercise; and launching the Prosecutor's Pledge. I am placing copies of both documents in the Library.

The new Guidelines develop and build on the previous Attorney-General's Guidelines on the acceptance of pleas published in 2000. They provide more detailed practical guidance for prosecutors particularly in relation to the sentencing hearing.

The Prosecutor's Pledge for the first time brings together in a single document, in the public domain, the level of service that victims can expect to receive from prosecutors. The 10 point pledge commitments will be applicable to all prosecuting authorities in due course, and will also apply to advocates instructed by the prosecution authorities. The Pledge will first be introduced by the CPS. Other prosecutors

will apply the principles set out in the Pledge to develop their own policies, adapting them as appropriate to meet the needs of their own particular cases and responsibilities".

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Regional Development Agencies

The Minister for Industry and the Regions (Alun Michael): On 21 July I laid before Parliament the annual reports and accounts for England's eight Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) outside London for 2004–05 and the RDAs' reported Tier 3 output results for 2004–05. Copies were placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

It has since been brought to my attention that the output figure for employment opportunities was reported inaccurately by Advantage West Midlands. Amended copies of the output results have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses, and are also available on the DTI website at: www.dti.gov.uk/rda/info. The correct figure is 11,760, which is above the Agency's target of 11,200. The incorrect figure given in July was 15,439.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 10 October 2005

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Army Prosecution Authority

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Solicitor-General how many times the Attorney-General (1) has intervened in cases being investigated by the Army Prosecution Authority in each year since 1996; [15049]

(2) has intervened in cases being investigated by the Army Prosecution Authority in each of the last 10 years. [15630]

The Solicitor-General: The Attorney-General is the superintending minister for the Service Prosecuting Authorities and therefore meets regularly with all three prosecuting authorities. They consult with him about a wide range of cases, in particular the most serious and complex.

Alcohol Sales (Prosecutions)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General how many prosecutions were brought by the Crown Prosecution Service in Southend against *(a)* nightclubs and *(b)* public houses for supplying alcohol to under-aged purchasers in each of the last three years for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [14138]

The Solicitor-General: It is not possible to separately identify instances of nightclubs and public houses prosecuted for supplying alcohol to under-aged purchasers on the Home Office Court Proceedings Database. The available data relates to all on and off licensed premises and are collated on a principal offence basis. The total figures are set out in the table that follows.

Number of defendants proceeded against at South East Essex magistrates courts for offences relating to the sale of alcohol to persons under 18 years of age, 2001 to 2003[1]

Offence	*Statute*	*Year*	*Proceeded against*
Selling etc., intoxicating liquor to persons under 18 for consumption on the premises[2]	Licensing Act, 1964, Section 169(1); Licensing (Occasional Permissions) Act 1983, Schedule (Sec. 3) para 4(1)	2001	2
		2002	1
		2003	5
Wholesaler selling intoxicating liquor to a person under 18	Licensing Act 1964, Sec. 181A(1) as added by Licensing Act 1988, Sec. 17	2001	[3]—
		2002	[3]—
		2003	[3]—

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Offence relates to all on and off licensed premises.
[3] Not available.

Correspondence

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Solicitor-General how many letters to the Law Officers from hon. Members in session *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06 remain unanswered, broken down by those which are (i) one month old, (ii) two months old, (iii) three months old, (iv) four months old and (v) over six months old. [13848]

The Solicitor-General: From 2004 *(a)* no letters are outstanding.

From 2005 *(b)* the figures are: (i) none; (ii) one; (iii) none; (iv) one; (v) one.

The Cabinet Office, on an annual basis, publishes a report to Parliament on the performance of Departments in replying to Members/Peers correspondence. The Report for 2004 was published on 6 April 2005 (col. 137–40ws).

Crown Prosecution Service

Sarah Teather: To ask the Solicitor-General how many cases referred to the Crown Prosecution Service in London have not been proceeded with because of the unwillingness of witnesses to give evidence in each year since 1997. [15355]

The Solicitor-General: During the year ending March 2005, 3,803 (2.2 per cent.) of all finalised CPS London cases resulted in an unsuccessful outcome through the unwillingness or non-attendance of witnesses. Comparable figures are not held for previous years.

Domestic Violence

Mr. MacShane: To ask the Solicitor-General what guidelines on Government policy on domestic violence the Crown Prosecution Service followed before making its decision to drop criminal charges relating to an alleged assault on Ms Annajoy David Da-Bora by her former partner and the abduction of her daughter. [15047]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) policy on domestic violence is set out in its policy booklet, published November 2001 and updated in February this year, entitled "Policy for Prosecuting Cases of Domestic Violence".

The guidance contained within the booklet was fully considered and applied to the decision-making process in this case. In so doing, particular reference was made to the detrimental effect that continuing the prosecution would have had upon Ms Da-Bora's daughter.

In this case, the proper application of the CPS's domestic violence policy and the Code for Crown Prosecutors meant that the prosecution could not proceed. This decision and the reasons for it were subsequently explained in writing to Ms Annajoy David Da-Bora.

Handcuffs (Exports)

Lynne Jones: To ask the Solicitor-General what action is to be taken in response to the report submitted to the Revenue and Customs Prosecution Office by HM Revenue and Customs into large hiatt handcuffs; and if he will make a statement. [16389]

The Solicitor-General: The report from HM Revenue and Customs has been considered by Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office (RCPO), the independent prosecution authority. RCPO has reviewed the evidence against the tests set out in the Code for Crown Prosecutors and has decided that there should not be a prosecution in this case.

Iraq

Mike Penning: To ask the Solicitor-General if he will list UK-based law firms that have been involved in legal cases in which all proceedings are complete in support of claims by foreign nationals against Her Majesty's forces in Iraq; and what public funds each received. [16065]

The Solicitor-General: There are no cases as described in which all proceedings are complete.

Military Nuclear Waste

Mike Penning: To ask the Solicitor-General if he will make a statement on European Court of Justice case C-61-03 OJ C132 vol. 48, of 28 May, on the decommissioning of military nuclear waste. [15974]

The Solicitor-General: The European Commission brought the case alleging that the UK had failed to fulfil its obligation to provide the Commission with data on the decommissioning of the 'Jason' reactor at the Royal Naval College in Greenwich, as required by article 37 of the Euratom treaty. The UK argued that the treaty does not apply to the use of nuclear energy for military activities and that therefore it was under no duty to provide the Commission with data on the decommissioning. The European Court of Justice found that the Euratom treaty is not applicable to uses of nuclear energy for military purposes and held that article 37 did not apply to the decommissioning of the Jason reactor.

DEFENCE

"Security, Terrorism and the UK" Report

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he has read the report, "Security, Terrorism and the UK", jointly published by the Economic and Social Research Council and Chatham House. [15026]

John Reid: Yes.

Aarhus Convention

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on UK participation in the Aarhus Convention as it applies to freedom of information obligations in environmental affairs of a defence nature, with particular reference to *(a)* depleted uranium and *(b)* nuclear material. [16058]

Mr. Touhig: Under the auspices of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the provisions of the Aarhus Convention relating to public access to environmental information have been implemented by the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. The Ministry of Defence is subject to both the Environmental Information Regulations and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Any requests to the Department for information about depleted uranium or nuclear material are answered in accordance with the terms of the relevant legislation.

Aircraft Carriers

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's latest estimate is of the *(a)* complement, *(b)* displacement and *(c)* cost of the future aircraft carriers. [15401]

Mr. Ingram: The future aircraft carrier project is in its assessment phase, the aim of which is to inform how best to meet our developing capability requirements and to balance the key parameters of performance, time and cost. The complement and displacement of the carriers form part of that assessment and final decisions on these and other main specifications have yet to be taken. Such details, together with estimated costs, are being constantly refined and it would be unhelpful to focus on specific figures until after the main investment decision.

Armed Forces (Overseas Personnel)

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* servicemen and *(b)* servicewomen serving in the UK armed forces are from overseas; what nations are represented in each of the services; in what numbers; and if he will make a statement. [15944]

Mr. Ingram: The numbers of servicemen and servicewomen serving in the UK armed forces who have a nationality other than British are shown by country in the following table.

Male UK regular forces with nationality other than British

Number

September 2005[2]	*All services*[3]	*Naval services*	*Army*	*RAF*
Total recorded non-British nationality[5]	6,400	430	[6]5,805	[7]165
Country				
Antigua	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
Australia	100	20	70	10
Bahamas	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
Bangladesh	5	[11]	5	[10]
Barbados	20	5	10	[11]
Belize	5	[10]	5	[10]
Botswana	5	[10]	5	[10]
Cameroon	20	[10]	20	[10]
Canada	100	20	60	20
Cyprus	[11]	[11]	[11]	[10]
Dominican Republic	10	[11]	10	[10]

Male UK regular forces with nationality other than British

Number

September 2005[2]	*All services*[1]	*Naval services*	*Army*	*RAF*
Egypt	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Eire	305	55	200	50
Falkland Islands	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
Fiji	1,880	60	1,820	[11]
Gambia	75	[11]	70	[11]
Germany[3]	[11]	[11]	[11]	[10]
Ghana	570	[11]	565	[11]
Gibraltar	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
Grenada	45	[11]	45	[10]
Guyana	15	[10]	15	[10]
India	45	5	40	[11]
Jamaica	795	15	760	20
Kenya	95	5	85	[11]
Malawi	75	[11]	70	[11]
Malaysia	10	[11]	5	[11]
Malta	10	[11]	5	[11]
Mauritius	20	[10]	20	[11]
Montserrat	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
Namibia	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
Nepal	25	[10]	25	[10]
New Zealand	80	10	60	[11]
Nigeria	50	[11]	50	[10]
Other African country	[11]	[10]	[10]	[11]
Other Asiatic country	[11]	[10]	[10]	[11]
Pacific Islands	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
Pakistan	10	[11]	10	[11]
Papua New Guinea	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
Seychelles	10	[10]	10	[10]
Sierra Leone	35	[10]	35	[10]
Singapore	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
South Africa	655	55	595	5
Sri Lanka[4]	15	[10]	10	[11]
St. Christopher	[11]	[10]	[10]	[11]
St. Helena	20	[11]	20	[11]
St. Kitts	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
St. Lucia	195	[11]	190	[11]
St. Vincent	380	105	270	[11]
Swaziland	5	[10]	5	[10]
Switzerland	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
Tanzania	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
Tonga	5	[10]	5	[10]
Trinidad and Tobago	80	15	60	10
Uganda	35	[10]	35	[10]
Ukraine	[11]	[11]	[10]	[10]
United Arab Emirates	10	10	[10]	[10]
USA	5	[11]	[11]	[11]
West Indies	[11]	[11]	[11]	[10]
Zambia	15	[11]	15	[10]
Zimbabwe/Rhodesia	500	10	485	10
Other non-British[5,7]	20	[10]	15	[11]
Not recorded	625	530	20	[8]70

Female UK regular forces with nationality other than British

Number

September 2005[2]	*All services*[1]	*Naval services*	*Army*	*RAF*
Total recorded non-British nationality[3]	750	60	[6]655	40
Country				
Antigua	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Australia	10	10	[11]	[11]
Bahamas	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Bangladesh	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Barbados	[11]	[11]	[11]	[11]
Belize	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Botswana	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Cameroon	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Canada	[11]	[10]	[11]	[11]
Cyprus	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
Dominican Republic	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]

Female UK regular forces with nationality other than British

Number

September 2005[2]	*All services*[1]	*Naval services*	*Army*	*RAF*
Egypt	[11]	[10]	[10]	[11]
Eire	25	5	10	10
Falkland Islands	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Fiji	160	10	145	[11]
Gambia	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Germany[3]	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
Ghana	20	[10]	20	[10]
Gibraltar	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Grenada	5	[10]	5	[10]
Guyana	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
India	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Jamaica	230	10	220	5
Kenya	10	[10]	10	[11]
Malawi	10	[10]	10	[10]
Malaysia	[11]	[10]	[10]	[11]
Malta	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Mauritius	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
Montserrat	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Namibia	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Nepal	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
New Zealand	5	[10]	5	[11]
Nigeria	5	[10]	5	[10]
Other African country	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Other Asiatic country	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Pacific Islands	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Pakistan	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Papua New Guinea	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Seychelles	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Sierra Leone	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
Singapore	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
South Africa	55	[11]	55	[11]
Sri Lanka[4]	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
St. Christopher	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
St. Helena	10	[10]	[11]	5
St Kitts	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
St. Lucia	35	[10]	35	[10]
St. Vincent	40	25	15	[10]
St. Vincent	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Switzerland	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Tanzania	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Tonga	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
Trinidad and Tobago	15	[11]	10	[11]
Uganda	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Ukraine	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
United Arab Emirates	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
USA	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
West Indies	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
Zambia	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
Zimbabwe/Rhodesia	90	[11]	85	[10]
Other non-British[6]	[11]	[10]	[11]	[10]
Not recorded	85	70	5	[9]10

[1] Naval service and Army data are for UK Regular Forces (trained and untrained), including nursing services and excluding full-time reserve service personnel, Gurkhas, the home service battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment and mobilised reservists. Naval service figures are for UK regular forces including nursing services, FTRS and activated reservists.

[2] Naval service data are provided by AFPAA as data are not centrally held. Data are for personnel serving at 3 October 2005. Army data are provided by DASA for personnel serving at 1 September 2005. RAF data are provided by AFPAA as data are not centrally held. Data are for personnel serving as at 16 September 2005.

[3] Includes personnel with nationality recorded as West German.

[4] Includes personnel with nationality recorded as Ceylon.

[5] Includes 15 personnel with nationality recorded as Commonwealth/foreign and personnel with nationality recorded as foreign/foreign.

[6] Includes personnel with nationality recorded as Commonwealth/foreign.

[7] Includes personnel with nationality recorded as foreign national.

[8] Includes 70 personnel recorded as Commonwealth by birth, but with no nationality recorded.

[9] Includes 10 personnel recorded as Commonwealth by birth, but with no nationality recorded.
[10] denotes zero.
[11] denotes less than five.
Note:
Data are rounded to 5 to prevent disclosure of sensitive information. Due to the founding methods used totals may not always equal the sum of the parts.
Source:
DASA (Tri-Service)

Armed Forces Deployment

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list UK armed forces units hatted for potential deployment with *(a)* EU and *(b)* NATO units. [16073]

Mr. Ingram: The Government declare forces to NATO and the EU through the Defence Planning Questionnaire and Force Catalogue respectively. The declarations entail that those forces are earmarked as available in principle for potential deployment on NATO or EU operations. Any actual decision to deploy is taken by the Government, voluntarily and on a case-by-case basis. However the Government are committed under article V of the North Atlantic Treaty to deployment in collective defence as required.

The forces declared are shown in the following tables. The tables' slightly different formats reflect the different ways in which NATO and the EU request nations to express their declarations.

UK units earmarked for potential NATO operations

Unit type	*Country plans 2005*
Land Units	
Headquarters Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (HQ ARRC) complete, including:	
Signal Brigades	2
Engineer Brigade	1
Reconnaissance Brigade	1
Artillery Brigade	1
Air Assault Brigade	1
Joint Helicopter Force	1
Rear Support Command Headquarters	1
RAPIER Air Defence Regiment	1
Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Unit	1
1 (UK) Armoured Division complete, including:	
Armoured Brigades	2
Mechanised Brigade	1
Logistic Brigade	1
3 (UK) Division complete, including:	
Mechanised Brigades	2
Light Brigade	1
Logistic Brigade	1
Maritime Units (Royal Navy and Royal Marines)	
Commander United Kingdom Maritime Forces (COMUKMARFOR):	
Maritime Component Commander	1
Aircraft Carrier:	
Aircraft Carrier—CVS (including Sea Harrier)	3
Destroyers/Frigates (AAW/ASW Ships):	
DD/FF (Multipurpose)	25
Submarines:	
Attack Nuclear	10
Ballistic Missile Nuclear	4

UK units earmarked for potential NATO operations

Unit type	*Country plans 2005*
Amphibious Warfare Ships (AMW Ships):	
Landing Platform Dock	2
Amphibious Warfare Ships (AMW Ship):	
Landing Platform Helicopter	1
Amphibious Warfare Ships (AMW Ships):	
Landing Ship Logistics	3
Mobile Logistic Support Ship (MLS):	
(Ammunition)	2
Mine Warfare Vessels:	
Mine Counter Measures Command and Support Ship	2
Mine Hunter/Mine Sweeper	16
Auxiliary Ships:	
(OILER)	10
RoRo (AKR)	6
HQ 3 CDO BDE RM	1
3 CDO BDE:	
(Amphibious Brigade comprising 3 RM Battalions, Artillery, Signals, Aviation and Logistics support)	1
Air Units	
E-3D	6
Tornado F3	20
Jaguar	14
Rapier	4
Tornado GR-1/4	60
Force Protection—Ground Defence Module	6
Nimrod-MR2	18
BAE125	5
BAE146	1
C-130 J/K	41
C-17	4
Force Protection—Ground Ops Support	5
Tristar C2	3
Tristar K1/KCI—VC10 C1K	14
VC10 K3/4	9
Harrier GR 7/9	28
Joint Units	
Combat Search and Rescue helicopters	8
Joint Force Special Operations Component Commander	1
Special Operations Forces Task Group	1
Joint Force Logistic Component, complete including:	
Joint Civil-Military Co-operation (CIMIC) Group	1
Infrastructure Engineering Brigade	1
Explosive Ordnance Disposal Regiment	1
Role 3 Medical (Field Hospital)	1,000 beds
Pioneer Regiment	1
Port and Maritime Regiment	1
Movement Control Regiments	2

UK units earmarked for potential EU operations

Unit type	*Country plans 2005*
Land Units	
Armoured or Mechanised Divisional Headquarters complete	1
Brigade headquarters complete (drawn from armoured, mechanised or airborne as required)	1
General Support Signal Regiments	2
Armoured Regiments	2
Armoured Infantry Battalions	2
Mechanised Infantry Battalions	2
Air Assault Battalions	3
Composite Aviation Unit	1
Support Helicopter Force	1

UK units earmarked for potential EU operations

Unit type	*Country plans 2005*
Field Artillery Regiments	3
Multi-Barrelled Launcher Rocket System (MLRS) Battery	1
RAPIER Air Defence Regiments	2
Close Support Engineer Regiments	2
General Support Engineer Regiments	2
Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company	1
Formation Reconnaissance Regiment	1
Special Operations Force Battalion	1
Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Unit	1
Logistic Battalion	1
Transport Battalions	3
General Support Logistic Regiment	1
Maintenance and Recovery Battalion	1
Role 3 Medical (Field Hospital) Unit	1
Military Police Companies	2
Maritime Units (Royal Navy and Royal Marines)	
Aircraft Carrier (With Sea Harrier)	1
Submarine Attack Nuclear	2
Destroyers/Frigates (AAW/ASW)	4
Auxiliary Ships	13
Amphibious Warfare Ships (LPH/LPD/LSL)	6
Mine Warfare Vessels	4
HQ 3 CDO BDE RM	1
3 CDO BDE RM	1
Survey Vessel	1
Air Units	
Tornado F3	18
Tornado GR4	24
Harrier GR7/9	10
Jaguar	8
VC10K/Tristar AAR-D	15
Ground Based Air Defence	2
Communications aircraft (BAE 125)	2
APOD	1
SIBCRA Team	1
Tristar/VC10 PAX	11
C130 J/K TCC-M	43
C17 TCC-H	4
Command, Control, Communications and Information Assets	
Operational Headquarters	1
Force Headquarters	1
Force Headquarters carrying ship	1
Special Operations Force Component Commander	1
Psychological Operations Component Commander	1
Land Component Commander HQ carrying ship	2
Land Component Commander	1
Maritime Component Commander	1
Air Component Commander	1
Combined Air Operations Centre	1
Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance Assets	
Airborne Warning and Control System aircraft	3
Airborne Early Warning aircraft	4
Electronic and signal intelligence gathering aircraft	2
Strategic reconnaissance aircraft	2
Ground-Based Electronic Warfare radar	1
Maritime Patrol Aircraft	4
Electronic Warfare Company Task Force	1
Surveillance and Target Acquisition unit	1

Bowman

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects Bowman to be fully operational. [15402]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 2110W, to the hon. Member for Congleton (Ann Winterton).

Colombia

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much the Department has spent on military aid to Colombia in each of the last five years. [16204]

Mr. Ingram: In Financial Years 2003–04 and 2004–05 the cost of military assistance provided by the UK MOD to the Colombian armed forces was around £120,000 per year. This assistance covered Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) training and the provision of courses to members of the Colombian armed forces, both in Colombia and in the UK. The former aimed to reduce the number of civilian and military deaths from explosive devices, and the latter at introducing Colombian military personnel to British Defence concepts in key areas, such as Rules of Engagement and democratic and accountable control of the armed forces.

The information for previous years is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Defence Export Services Organisation

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) on how many occasions the Defence Export Services Organisation has provided advice to UK companies on the selection of agents in the last 12 months; [15340]

(2) what mechanisms the Defence Export Services Organisation uses to record the advice given by its *(a)* British-based and *(b)* overseas staff to companies on the selection of agents; [15341]

(3) whether the Defence Export Services Organisation provides *(a)* off the shelf lists and *(b)* bespoke lists of companies in relation to the selection of agents. [15342]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Leyton and Wanstead (Harry Cohen) on 12 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 861W. Such advice is typically given in the course of routine and informal contact with industry and is therefore not normally minuted or recorded on file. For countries in which the use of agents is part of normal business practice, DESO tries to meet any requests received for a list, relying as far as possible on information already held.

European Contractors

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the contractors based in other EU member states that are providing services to his Department. [15441]

Mr. Ingram: The information is not held in the format requested.

European Defence Agency

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the work plans of the European Defence Agency are; what its cost has been to date; and if he will make a statement on its future. [15467]

Mr. Ingram: There are currently four 'flagship' projects within the European Defence Agency (EDA) work programme, representing the priority areas for the Agency:

Command, Control and Communications—looking into current ESDP operational shortfalls, in order to develop capacity and interoperability for the future;

Armoured Fighting Vehicles—understanding future requirements and relevant technological and industrial needs to bring forward proposals to improve collaboration in technology development and procurement programmes;

European Defence Equipment Market—carrying out work on the introduction of a voluntary code of conduct for the manner in which member states procure defence equipment in order to improve the competitiveness and efficiency; and

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles—looking at future research and technology needs.

Other major activities include: the full establishment of the Agency; the transfer of responsibilities from the Western European Armaments Group/Western European Armaments Organisation; review of the European defence test and evaluation base and development of longer-term thinking for the improvement of European defence capability and capacity.

The EDA's budget from its establishment in July 2004 to the end of 2004 was €1.8 million. The Agency has a budget of €19.9 million for 2005. For 2005 the United Kingdom will pay €3,596, 803 towards the EDA budget, met from the MOD's budget.

The Government are a strong supporter of the European Defence Agency. The future success of the Agency will be a critical factor in driving forward work to improve European defence capabilities by encouraging and supporting the efforts of individual EU member states. The Agency will significantly strengthen both the European Security and Defence Policy and Europe's contribution to NATO by rationalising and harmonising capability requirements, and linking those directly to industrial and research efforts.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the treaty basis is for those elements of the European Defence Agency that have already been established. [15912]

Mr. Ingram: The European Defence Agency was formally established on 12 July 2004 by a unanimous Heads of State and Government decision. It was established under the Council Joint Action 2004/551/CFSP on the basis of Article 14 of the Treaty on the European Union.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list those elements of the UK defence industry duplicated by other EU defence industries; what the role is of the European Defence Agency in removing duplication; which elements *(a)* have and *(b)* have not been identified as being of strategic national interest; and if he will make a statement. [15913]

Mr. Ingram: Other European defence industries include many similar capabilities to those of the UK defence industry, although these capabilities are not necessarily identical. It is therefore difficult to assess which elements are duplicated and I am unable to provide a list.

The European Defence Agency (EDA) has a number of workstrands under way that are intended to improve the effectiveness of the European Defence Equipment Market (EDEM), including the possible introduction of a voluntary intergovernmental code of conduct. While this work is not intended specifically at removing duplication, we would expect through a more competitive and efficient EDEM that market forces would have a beneficial impact on surplus capacity and inefficiencies. More generally the EDA intends to look at future demand and capacity in various sectors of the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (such as armoured fighting vehicles), as well as member states' national strategies for these areas, which may lead to recommendations for improving the efficiency in these sectors. However it will be for each member state to decide how or indeed whether to take these forward.

Our work to formulate a national defence industrial strategy, recently announced by the Minister for Defence Procurement, will identify those industrial capabilities that we wish to retain within the UK in order to ensure appropriate sovereignty and/or contribute to collaborative efforts. We expect to make a major announcement on this work by the end of 2005, along with our initial conclusions on specific sectors. The strategy is one of many initiatives that contribute to the wider aim of ensuring that the capability requirements of the armed forces can be met, now and in the future, on a cost-effective basis.

Fuel Expenditure

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the Department's expenditure on fuel was in each of the last 10 years. [15403]

Mr. Ingram: The costs of fuel consumption are only available for the years in which Departmental Resource Accounts have been produced. The fuel costs are shown in the following table and include vehicle and aviation fuel, engine oil and lubricants.

	£ million
2000–01	331
2001–02	368
2002–03	364
2003–04	370
2004–05	402

In addition the costs of fuel oil consumed for heating purposes were as follows:

	£ million
2000–01	19
2001–02	21
2002–03	26
2003–04	21
2004–05	26

Independent Assessor of Military Complaints

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reasons he did not allow the Independent Assessor of Military Complaints access to

the Army records of 11 and 12 July 2004 North Belfast Parades; and if he will allow the Independent Assessor access to these records. [16135]

Mr. Ingram: We thoroughly considered the request for papers by the Independent Assessor and concluded that they were not required to enable the assessor to carry out his statutory function under the Terrorism Act 2000. In reaching this conclusion, the Ministry of Defence considered whether further analysis of the events on 12 July 2004 was necessary. The policing of these parades was examined in considerable detail by Keir Starmer QC and Jane Gordon in their special report for the Policing Board published in November 2004. We do not consider, given the action already taken, that any useful purpose would be served by further examination.

Ministry of Defence officials have written to Mr. McDonald to explain this reasoning.

Iraq

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations his Department has made to the Iraqi Government concerning the pursuit of those guilty of the fatal attack on six British military policemen in Iraq in June 2003. [15532]

Mr. Ingram: We are doing all we can to enable those responsible for the deaths of the six soldiers to be brought to justice, and we continue to take steps to ensure that this case remains a priority for the Iraqi authorities, who retain jurisdiction.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many British troops have served in Iraq to date; and how many were deployed there on 1 January and 1 July. [16213]

Mr. Ingram: The approximate number of British Service personnel deployed to Iraq on 1 January and 1 July were 7,660 and 7,940 respectively.

Information on the total number of personnel who have served in Iraq is not available centrally. However, the estimated number of Service personnel who have been deployed on Operation Telic to date is 99,500.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list *(a)* ordnance and *(b)* weapons systems which have been intercepted on or in the vicinity of the Iraq/Iran border by (i) coalition forces, (ii) UK service personnel and (iii) Iraq security services since the collapse of the Saddam regime; and if he will make a statement. [16697]

Mr. Ingram: We do not hold this information centrally.

IT Projects

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what computerisation or IT failures have occurred in projects managed by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the various branches of the armed forces in each year since 1997; what the contracted cost of the project was in each case; and what estimate he has made of the direct and indirect costs of failure or breakdown in each case. [14368]

Mr. Touhig: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Joint Strike Fighter

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what contingency plans his Department has developed in the event of failure to secure agreement with the United States on technology transfer on the Joint Strike Fighter. [15405]

Mr. Ingram: The UK has secured access to the technical information we need at this stage of the Joint Combat Aircraft programme. We have a strategy in place aimed at ensuring that the Ministry of Defence continues to have adequate information access to support the programme.

Local Government Finance Review

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library copies of his Department's representations to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on the review of local government finance. [15684]

Mr. Ingram: No such representations have been made.

Military Deployment (Northern Ireland)

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many members of the regular armed forces are serving in Northern Ireland. [15257]

Mr. Ingram: As at 1 April 2005 there were 7,060 United Kingdom regular forces personnel posted to Northern Ireland. The numbers serving in Northern Ireland may differ slightly, due to personnel being deployed to other locations.

Military Personnel (Medals)

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many military personnel who have served *(a)* in Operation Telic in Iraq and *(b)* in Afghanistan since 2001 have been awarded a medal; how many eligible personnel have not received a medal; how many personnel who have fulfilled the minimum criteria for long service have not yet been awarded the relevant medal; what the average timescale between qualifying for such awards and issue is; and if he will make a statement. [16064]

Mr. Touhig: It is not possible to answer the question fully because the information is either not held or broken down in the manner requested.

As at 26 September 2005, 92,171 applications have been received for the Iraq Medal. Of these, 81,344 have been assessed and 10,827 are awaiting assessment. There is a three-month timescale from receipt of application to issue of medal.

As at 26 September 2005, 3,609 applications have been received for the Operational Service Medal for Afghanistan. Of these, 916 have been assessed and 2,693 are awaiting assessment. Applications are cleared within three months of receipt.

Medals for long Service are dealt with in order of receipt and, under normal circumstances, are cleared within three months. There are currently 1,228 outstanding.

National Service Conscripts Medal

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will take steps to introduce a national service conscripts medal. [15895]

Mr. Touhig: It has never been the Government's policy to consider service in the armed forces as the sole justification for the institution of a medal. People who were conscripted into the armed forces during the Second World War and in the post-war years and who took part in campaigns or operations for which medals were subsequently awarded, had an equal right to receive them as did their regular colleagues. It would be divisive to offer national service veterans a medal simply for being conscripted, when those who volunteered for service would be excluded from receiving any award.

Nuclear Deterrent

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much the UK Government has paid Atomic Weapons Establishment Management Limited in each of the last 20 years. [14990]

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total expenditure on AWE Aldermaston was in each of the past five years; and what the estimated expenditure is for *(a)* 2006–07 and *(b)* 2007–08. [16212]

John Reid: The contract between the Ministry of Defence and Atomic Weapons Establishment Management Limited commenced in April 2000. Annual expenditure at the Establishment since then, and that projected for 2005–06 to 2007–08, is as follows:

Atomic weapons establishment annual expenditure (as at October 2005, £ million, 2005–06 prices)

	£ million
2000–01	311
2001–02	291
2002–03	278
2003–04	300
2004–05	363
2005–06	[1]507

[1] Forecast.

On current planning we expect expenditure at the Atomic Weapons Establishment to be a total for the next two financial years (2006–07 and 2007–08) of around £1.5 billion.

Figures previously published in the 18 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 478W have now been uprated to 2005–06 prices. In addition, certain elements of cost have been re-allocated between 2002–03 and 2003–04. The figure for 2004–05, previously reported as provisional, now reflects actual expenditure. I notified these changes to my hon. Friend the Member for Islington, North (Jeremy Corbyn) on 16 August 2005. A copy of my letter is in the Library of the House.

RAF Pilot Training

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost is of training a pilot *(a)* through and *(b)* by direct entry to the Royal Air Force. [15667]

Mr. Touhig: The difference in the cost of training a pilot through the University Air Squadron and direct entry is shown in the following table.

Pilot training costs

£

Pilot type	*Cost*
Fast jet	
University air squadron	1,857,541
Direct entrant	1,848,181
Multi engine	
University air squadron	400,298
Direct entrant	390,938
Rotary wing	
University air squadron	581,323
Direct entrant	571,963

Note:
Costs exclude operational conversion unit training.

RAF Saxa Vord

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what *(a)* trade union and *(b)* local consultation will take place on proposals to close RAF Saxa Vord; and if he will make a statement; [16008]

(2) what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Scottish Executive and *(b)* Shetland Island council on proposals to close RAF Saxa Vord. [16009]

Mr. Ingram: On 21 July this year, I announced a period of trade unions consultation on our provisional decision to place RAF Saxa Vord on care and maintenance from April 2006. No objection to the proposal was received from the trade unions and I announced in my letter to you on 6 October that we intended to proceed as planned. Further consultation with the trades unions will take place as the measure is implemented.

I wrote to the First Minister of the Scottish Parliament in July to inform him of the provisional decision, and again in October following the trade union consultation; my officials acted similarly in respect of the Scottish Executive. Officials have also held informal discussions with the local authority, the local enterprise company and their consultants as well as the Hjaltland Housing Association. Further discussions will now take place and a full draw down programme will be agreed.

Reservists

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on plans for call-out of reservists in support of operations in Afghanistan. [15972]

Mr. Touhig: Reservists have made a valuable contribution to operations in Afghanistan since operations commenced in that theatre in 2001 and some

63 reservists were called out in the 12-month period ending 30 September 2005. We plan to renew the call-out Order which expired at the end of last month so that reservists can continue to be brought into service to support operations in Afghanistan.

Surface Fleet

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 19 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1540W, on surface fleet, which ships he expects will be available *(a)* on active service and *(b)* in reserve in (i) 2012, (ii) 2013 and (iii) 2014. [15813]

Mr. Ingram: It is currently planned that the Royal Navy will operate a fleet of 25 destroyers and frigates. At present there are no plans for any of these ships to be held at very low readiness other than when undergoing refit or major maintenance work.

TA/Cadet Forces

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the role of each unit of the *(a)* Territorial Army and *(b)* cadet forces in Milton Keynes is; and if he will make a statement. [15293]

Mr. Touhig: The information requested is detailed in the following table:

Unit	*Role*
E (Royal Green Jackets) Company, Royal Rifle Volunteers, Territorial Army	An infantry company with both rifle and mortar platoons
1 Company Headquarters, Buckinghamshire Army Cadet Force (ACF), 10 Platoon, Buckinghamshire ACF	The ACF role is to inspire young people to achieve success within their local community and develop in them the qualities of a good citizen.

Tain Air Weapons Range

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many hours the Tain Air Weapons Range was in use for training operations in 2004. [15552]

Mr. Ingram: During 2004, the Tain Air Weapons Range was in use by aircraft for a total of 712 hours and 45 minutes.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many sorties were undertaken using the Tain Air Weapons Range in 2004 by *(a)* RAF aircraft and *(b)* non-RAF aircraft. [15553]

Mr. Ingram: The information is not held in the form requested; we record the number of passes made over the Tain Air Weapons Range by aircraft training there, rather than the number of sorties. A sortie may involve more than one pass over the range. The following table shows the total number of passes made by aircraft at Tain Air Weapons Range, broken down by RAF and non-RAF aircraft.

Number of passes made in 2004

Number of RAF aircraft passes	20,868
Number of non-RAF aircraft passes	1,063

Trident Nuclear Missile System

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has held with the US Administration on purchasing a replacement for the Trident nuclear missile system. [16211]

John Reid: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk (Mr. Moore) on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 2120W.

Trident/Vanguard Replacements

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether a decision has been taken to replace the Trident D5 missiles and 4 Vanguard class submarines. [16359]

John Reid: I have nothing to add to the answer I gave to the hon. Members for The Wrekin (Mark Pritchard) and for New Forest, West (Mr. Swayne) on 6 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 985.

Typhoon

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what tests have been conducted on the Typhoon's weapons systems on the Gripen; and when he expects weapons testing on the Typhoon to be completed. [15396]

Mr. Ingram: The Meteor missile, which will be integrated onto Typhoon, is using Gripen as its primary development platform. Weapons testing on Typhoon is currently planned to continue at least until 2013 and probably beyond as new generations of weapon become available.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the effects of the decision by the Greek government to purchase the F-16 on the export potential of the Typhoon. [15397]

Mr. Ingram: Eurofighter Typhoon is a world-class aircraft with significant export potential and a number of countries have expressed an interest in the aircraft. In announcing its decision to purchase further F-16 aircraft, the Greek government made clear its intention also to acquire a fourth generation fighter aircraft. The United Kingdom and its Eurofighter Partner Nations believe strongly that Eurofighter Typhoon would meet this requirement. We continue to support our German partners who are leading this campaign.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made on missile integration for the Typhoon. [15404]

Mr. Ingram: The advanced short range air-to-air missile (ASRAAM), advanced medium range air-to-air missile (AMRAAM), AIM-9L and IRIS-T are being integrated onto Typhoon; although only the ASRAAM and AMRAAM will be used by the RAF. The majority of this work is now complete and in-service firings of ASRAAM have taken place. Further missile integration onto Typhoon is planned as part of the proposed future capability programme (FCP). The programme is expected to include meteor and stormshadow integration along with upgrades to ASRAAM and AMRAAM.

Uganda

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assistance the Government are providing to the Ugandan Government for training of soldiers in peacekeeping and protecting civilian populations in northern Uganda. [15549]

Mr. Ingram: The UK provides a small amount of training annually for the Ugandan Peoples' Defence Force (UPDF). This training is funded from both the Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (ACPP) and the Defence Assistance Fund (DAF), and is primarily targeted at increasing national capacity to conduct Peace Support Operations (PSO).

Training activities include the deployment of Short Term Training Teams to Uganda and attendance on relevant courses in UK. Funding has also been provided for Kenyan instructors to deliver a two week PSO package at the Ugandan Staff College. In addition, the UK funded International Mine Action Training Centre in Nairobi has recently commenced the training of 140 UPDF engineers in humanitarian de-mining in preparation for mine clearance operations in northern Uganda, overseen by the UN Development Programme and the Mines Awareness Trust. A similar programme of activities is being developed for 2006–07.

Our Defence Adviser in Kampala provides general advice to the UPDF on dealing with the threat from the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) and protecting the civilian population in northern Uganda, including the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) in camps. The importance of protecting the civilian population is routinely stressed in contacts with the Ugandan authorities.

DfID has separately provided approximately £2.5 million in non-military assistance for conflict resolution efforts in northern and eastern Uganda. In addition, DfID is supporting a number of programmes responding to the plight of vulnerable groups affected by conflict. This includes help to protect children who commute into main towns each night to avoid abduction by the LRA. Furthermore, UNICEF has a protection team based in northern Uganda, which the UK helps finance. This team undertakes specific interventions to make the environment safer for women and children in the IDP camps.

UK Military Advice/Training

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many training courses held in the UK the UK has provided to military personnel from overseas in each year since 1997, broken down by *(a)* country of origin and *(b)* number of personnel involved . [15940]

Mr. Ingram: During the period 1997 to date, the UK has provided training courses in the UK for military personnel from 145 countries.

A table, which has been placed in the Library, contains a complete list of those countries broken down by country of origin and number of personnel involved in each year since 1997.

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what assessment he has made of the *(a)* extent and *(b)* impact of the UK's human rights training of foreign military personnel; and if he will make a statement; [15943]

(2) if he will list the countries to which the UK has provided human rights training in *(a)* the military and *(b)* other security sectors in each year since 1997; and what (i) type and (ii) duration of training was provided in each case. [15942]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence does not provide human rights training as a specific subject, but we reinforce adherence to the key principles in much of the training we offer. MOD training underlines the role of military forces within wider civil society, the importance of conducting activities within the rule of law, the role and importance of proportionate rules of engagement, and ensuring the proper democratic controls. It is not possible to isolate these aspects of our training for analysis.

University Air Squadrons

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what changes are planned for the operation of university air squadrons, with particular reference to flying instruction. [15665]

Mr. Touhig: I refer the hon. Member to my written statement of today.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the role of university air squadrons in *(a)* making a risk assessment of potential pilots and *(b)* providing a link between the Royal Air Force and the civilian population. [15666]

Mr. Touhig: All new pilot recruits to the Royal Air Force have to successfully complete the Officer and Aircrew Selection Centre, regardless of method of entry. It is here that in-depth psychometric competency testing is undertaken to ensure that the right pilots are taken into the Royal Air Force. While the University Air Squadrons do not specifically make a risk assessment of potential pilots, they have, over the past 10 years, acted as part of the streaming process during Elementary Flying Training. The recent changes mean that Elementary Flying Training will now be undertaken at a more appropriate stage.

University Air Squadrons provide a link by raising the profile of the Royal Air Force and project a positive image of the service through University Air Squadron members to other undergraduates, university staff and the wider civilian community. Their principle aim is to provide a practical link between the Royal Air Force and universities, thereby fostering an interest in and understanding of the Royal Air Force.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what role university air squadrons play in recruiting personnel to the Royal Air Force. [15668]

Mr. Touhig: The principle aim of the University Air Squadrons is to provide a practical link between the Royal Air Force and universities, thereby fostering an interest in and understanding of the Royal Air Force. In the two year period 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2005

the successful University Air Squadron applicants represented nine percent of the officer recruiting target for that period.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what percentage of pilots entering the Royal Air Force since 1997 have passed through university air squadrons. [15669]

Mr. Touhig: The information requested is shown in the table.

	Total in	*University air squadrons (percentage)*
1997–98	95	64
1998–99	187	60
1999–2000	187	50
2000–01	178	53
2001–02	178	49
2002–03	177	53
2003–04	167	56

Websites

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what websites come under his Department's responsibility; and what the *(a)* cost and *(b)* number of visitors to those sites was in 2004–05. [16006]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence and armed forces collectively maintain five corporate websites. Direct expenditure on these and the number of visits that each site received in the financial year 2004–05 were as follows:

Organisation	*Address*	*Expenditure (£)*	*Visits[1] (million)*
Ministry of Defence	www.mod.uk	127,192	10.3
Freedom of Information	www.foi.mod.uk	30,000	0.5
Royal Navy	www.royal-navy.mod.uk	197,888	28.3
British Army	www.army.mod.uk	96,000	39.3
Royal Air Force	www.raf.mod.uk	121,213	137
Total	—	572,293	—

[1] Number of visitors is based on unique page views for each site apart from the Royal Air Force whose figures show total number of hits.

A number of other, generally small, websites are maintained by subsidiary organisations of the MOD and armed forces. However, information on their expenditure and number of visitors is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Artists' Resale Right Regulations 2005

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he has had with the Design and Artists Copyright Society on the Artist's Resale Right Regulations 2005; and when the submissions on the public consultation on implementing the European Directive on Droit de Suite will be published. [15872]

Alan Johnson: On my behalf, officials at the Patent Office are involved in on-going discussions with the Design Artists Copyright Society on the Artist's Resale Right Regulations and have met them regularly. All submissions to the public consultation are available from the Patent Office.

Bank Holidays

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the *(a)* economic and *(b)* social effects of increasing the number of bank holidays. [15578]

Mr. Sutcliffe: In 2001, we estimated that the cost to business of an additional bank holiday would be around £2 billion. It is possible that there would be positive social effects of an additional bank holiday, for example working parents spending more time with their children. However, there is a need to balance the possible benefits of increasing the number of bank holidays to individuals and some businesses against the cost and disruption to other businesses and there are other ways of achieving this positive social effect.

Business Practice (Wage Labour)

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he has taken to monitor the business practices of United Kingdom-based international corporations abroad, with particular reference to wage labour; and if he will make a statement. [16283]

Ian Pearson: UK-based international companies which operate in other countries, and which are subject to the laws applicable in those counties are encouraged to apply high standards of corporate behaviour, including their protecting workers rights.

The UK plays a leading role in ensuring that the international framework to promote and to tackle abuses of those rights throughout the world is in place, through its work with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), which is responsible for developing, promoting and monitoring labour standards. We play an active role in the ILO Committee on Multinational Enterprises and support the promotion and follow-up of the ILO Declaration of Principles Concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy which seeks to enhance the positive social and labour effects of multinational corporations' operations throughout the world.

We also promote the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises which recommend standards of responsible business conduct for businesses operating in or from the 37 adhering countries and have written to the FTSE 100 companies to raise awareness of these expectations. We have also set out our approach to encouraging environmentally and socially responsible practice internationally in our "International Strategic Framework on Corporate Social Responsibility" published in March.

Carbon Emissions

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the effect of the closure of nuclear power stations on UK carbon emissions for each of the next 15 years. [16303]

Malcolm Wicks: In November 2004 the Department published projections of generation for the period to 2020. Because of uncertainty about the generation mix

in individual years figures were produced for 2010, 2015 and 2020 only. They include assumptions about the closure dates of British Energy nuclear plants after 2010. The projections are available at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/sepn/uep_addendum.pdf.

On the current projections it is expected that 2.2GW of plant will have closed by 2010, a further 3.6GW by 2015 and an additional 2.4GW by 2020.

British Energy, however, recently announced that it intended to seek a life extension for its Dungeness B plant until 2018.

The effect of nuclear closures on carbon emissions will depend on the assumptions on the replacement plant. If the replacement plant is gas-fired then each TWh of generation is projected to produce around 0.1 million tonnes of carbon.

Carbon Sequestration

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make it his policy to ensure future offshore oil and gas pipelines and infrastructure are suitable for carbon sequestration. [14901]

Malcolm Wicks: As part of the work leading on from the Carbon Abatement Technology Strategy which I announced last month we will be looking at this issue and will decide on the most appropriate policy on pipelines and infrastructure as a result.

Charity Stamp

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) if he will encourage the Royal Mail to introduce a charity stamp, sold over the counter at a higher price than normal, with the surplus revenue being allocated to a consortium of charities; [16654]

(2) what *(a)* representations he has received and *(b)* discussions he has had concerning the possibility of the Royal Mail introducing a charity stamp, sold over the counter at a higher price than normal, with the surplus revenue being allocated to a consortium of charities; [16655]

(3) what commercial freedom the Royal Mail has to introduce a charity stamp, sold over the counter at a higher price than normal, with the surplus revenue being allocated to a consortium of charities, without ministerial approval. [16656]

Barry Gardiner: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State has not received any representations or held any discussions on this subject. Decisions relating to stamp issues are the direct responsibility of Royal Mail's management.

Community Safety Unit

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the status of the Community Safety Unit within his Department. [15925]

Alun Michael: In order to better achieve our target of having among the best consumer protection and empowerment and competition regimes in the world, the work of the former consumer safety unit has largely been integrated with the work of other units in the Department's Consumer and Competition Policy Directorate and Standards and Technical Regulations Directorate. The UK is one of the safest places in Europe for consumers and we are working to maintain and improve that position.

Departmental Contracts

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment is made *(a)* of the environmental impact and *(b)* against sustainable development criteria of the bids made for contracts awarded by his Department; and if he will make a statement. [16143]

Alan Johnson: All specifications for contracts relating to the Department's estate include environmental clauses reflecting the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. Bidders are required to provide method statements detailing how they will perform the contract to deliver their environmental commitments and bids are evaluated against these requirements.

The Department's ICT procurement is undertaken via a central contract which provides for full consideration of environmental risk during the procurement of products and services supplied to the Department, together with compliance with EU Directives and EN ISO 9001–2000 for the disposal and recycling of IT equipment.

Departmental Estate

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total floor space area is of buildings *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by (i) his Department and (ii) its agencies. [16239]

Alan Johnson: The DTI HQ estate comprises 94,289 sq. metres of leased office accommodation. In addition the Department retains the Government freehold on three sites totalling 87,612 of building space which are under lease to research organisations.

Letter from Ron Marchant to Mr. Alan Reid, dated 10 October 2005:

I am responding to this parliamentary question, tabled on 22 July 2005, regarding the total floor space area of buildings owned and leased by the Patent Office. The Patent Office owns Concept House, the Headquarters and Main building, which is 15,589 square metres. The Office also leases two warehouses with a combined floor space of 4,846 square metres. In addition the Patent Office occupies 781 square metres of Government buildings, Newport and 1473 square metres of Harmsworth House, London under MOTOs (Memorandum of Terms of Occupation) from the ONS and the Charity Commission respectively.

Letter from Claire Clancy to Mr. Alan Reid, dated 10 October 2005:

I am responding to your recently tabled Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on behalf of Companies House, which is an Executive Agency of the DTI.

The total floor space area of buildings owned by Companies House is 29,000M^2. The total floor space area leased is 4,200M^2.

Letter from Iain MacGregor to Mr. Alan Reid, dated 10 October 2005:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply on behalf of the National Weights and Measures Laboratory (NWML) to your question regarding the total floor space are of buildings *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by NWML.

The total floor space area for NWML, including office, primary circulation, laboratories & plantroom is 4481 sq. metres.

Letter from Desmond Flynn to Mr. Alan Reid, dated 10 October 2005:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply to you directly on behalf of The Insolvency Service in respect of your question (996/2005) asking what the total floor space area is of buildings *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by this agency.

All of The Insolvency Service's buildings are leased. The total floor space area is 29,530 square metres.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what he has identified as the most significant sustainable development impacts in relation to the operation of the estate of his Department. [16244]

Alan Johnson: The sustainable development aspects relating to the operation of the estate have been assessed and are recorded within the ISO 14001 certified Environmental Management System.

Of the 212 environmental aspects only three fall into the significant range within the assessments. Two of these are waste related, the third is related to the energy consumed to provide heat, light and energy to the buildings.

Departmental IT Projects

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what computerisation or IT failures have occurred in projects managed by his Department in each year since 1997; what the contracted cost of the project was in each case; and what estimate he has made of the *(a)* direct and *(b)* indirect costs of failure or breakdown in each case. [14367]

Alan Johnson: Since 1997 the Department of Trade and Industry (excluding agencies) has experienced one significant computerisation or IT failure in a project managed by the Department.

Personnel records system project.

Contracted total cost of project £750,000.

Contract terminated in February 1999 before project completion.

An estimate of costs was made as part of a settlement agreed with the supplier which is subject to a confidentiality agreement. The release of details related to the agreed settlement would prejudice commercial interests.

Departmental Paper

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures he has put in place to ensure that his Department meets the targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [16131]

Alan Johnson: It is DTI policy that all paper purchased for copying paper and that for printed publications complies with the targets met by DEFRA. Those targets have been achieved.

The DTI's office supplies contractor is required to provide an 80/20 recycled green product for all copy paper. The DTI publications unit specify that all publications generated by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of *(a)* copying paper and *(b)* paper for printed publications used by his Department in (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05 was from recycled sources and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained in each case. [16148]

Alan Johnson: It is DTI HQ Policy that all paper purchased for copying paper and that for printed publications complies with the targets met by Defra. Those targets have been achieved.

The DTI's office supplies contractor is required to provide an 80/20 recycled green product for all copy paper. The DTI publications unit specify that all publications generated by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste.

During 2003–04, all copier and printed publication paper purchased from framework suppliers was from a recycled source and compliant to the Defra target. The post-consumer content such paper contained was a minimum of 75 per cent.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry by what date his Department expects to implement in full the targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [16240]

Alan Johnson: It is DTI HQ Policy that all paper purchased for copying paper and that for printed publications complies with the targets met by Defra. The targets have been achieved.

DTI's office supplies contractor is required to provide 80/20 mix recycled green product for all copy paper. The DTI HQ publications unit specify that all publications generated by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports, in each case stating (i) the name of each paper used and (ii) the recycled and post-consumer recycled content of each paper. [16241]

Alan Johnson: It is DTI HQ policy that all paper purchased for copying paper and that for printed publications complies with the targets met by Defra. These have been met.

The DTI HQ office supplies contractor, Office Depot, provide Niceday 3500 which is an 80/20 recycled green product for all copier paper. Office Depot also supply Niceday own brand envelopes manufactured from recycled materials. Any bespoke stationery supplied under this contract is Conquer 100gsm made with recycled paper.

The DTI HQ publications unit specify that all publications generated by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste.

Departmental Vehicles

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many vehicles for which the Department is responsible are fitted with retreaded tyres. [15417]

Alan Johnson: The Department is responsible for no vehicles.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what change there has been in road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions from his Department against a baseline year of 2003–04. [16250]

Alan Johnson: For the year of 2004–05 and against a baseline year of 2003–04 there was a 10.25 per cent. reduction in road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions from my Department.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what change there has been in road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions from his Department against a baseline year of *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05. [16262]

Alan Johnson: The information requested is as follows:

(a) In the year of 2004–05 there was a 10.25 per cent. reduction in road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions from my Department against a baseline year of 2003–04.

(b) For the year 2005–06, data is not yet available to establish the reduction in road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions from my Department against a baseline year of 2004–05.

Departmental Water Usage

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry at which of his Department's sites he has identified opportunities for significant water savings. [16145]

Alan Johnson: The DTI HQ estate comprises of 11 locations all of which have had water saving assessments and water saving initiatives have been put into place appropriate to the size of the sites. Water consumption data is collected and reported on monthly and is included within the overall departmental sustainable development returns.

Overall the DTI HQ estate has experienced a reduction in total water consumption between April 2002 and March 2005 of 34 per cent. and a reduction in consumption per capita of 20 per cent.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what change there has been in water consumption by his Department between 31 March 2002 and 31 March 2005. [16146]

Alan Johnson: The DTI HQ estate has experienced a reduction in total water consumption between April 2002 and March 2005 of 34 per cent. and a reduction in consumption per capita of 20 per cent.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what change there was in water consumption by his Department between 2002 and 31 March 2005. [16263]

Alan Johnson: The DTI HQ estate has experienced a reduction in total water consumption between April 2002 and March 2005 of 34 per cent. and a reduction in consumption per capita of 20 per cent.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry at which non office sites on his Department's estates he has identified opportunities for significant water savings. [16264]

Alan Johnson: The DTI HQ estate comprises of only two small non office locations both of which, have had water saving assessments and water saving initiatives have been put into place appropriate to the size of the site. Water consumption data is collected and reported on monthly and is included within the overall Departmental Sustainable Development returns.

Overall the DTI HQ estate has experienced a reduction in total water consumption between April 2002 and March 2005 of 34 per cent. and a reduction in consumption per capita of 20 per cent.

Digital Television

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the number of televisions which will be disposed of as household waste following the transfer to digital transmission. [16839]

Alun Michael: All electrical equipment would be disposed of in the natural course of events. Digital switchover itself does not require any equipment to be thrown away, but its timing may affect the timing of disposal of some equipment such as rarely used televisions that people choose not to adapt. DTI and Defra are commissioning research to model any changes in patterns of waste disposal generated by switchover now that the timescale has been determined. DCMS and DTI will continue to work with Digital UK to ensure that consumer communications do not encourage unnecessary disposal of television equipment.

Energy Efficiency

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what targets he has set for improving energy efficiency; and how he intends to achieve those targets. [16257]

Alan Johnson: DTI are working toward achieving the energy efficiency targets expressed in the framework for sustainable development, Part E—Energy. The targets

set are to improve the energy efficiency of the buildings on the estate by 15 per cent. in terms of KWH usage and that used per square metre by 2010–11.

The DTI London HQ estate is currently being reduced by approximately 30 per cent. as the result of a major rationalisation programme to make more efficient use of our accommodation with significant associated reductions in the Department's overall energy usage.

The Department has implemented a number of energy efficiency initiatives since the target was published. The main strategy is to gain efficiencies as a result of the estate strategy to reduce the physical size of the estate and the number of buildings combined with continuing investment in the remaining buildings in energy efficiency projects to improve lighting and environmental controls as well as occupant awareness.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what targets he has set for improving energy efficiency in his Department; and how he intends to achieve these targets. [16259]

Alan Johnson: DTI are working toward achieving the energy efficiency targets expressed in the framework for sustainable development, Part E—Energy. The targets set are to improve the energy efficiency of the buildings on the estate by 15 per cent. in terms of KWH usage and that used per square metre by 2010–11.

The DTI London HQ estate is currently being reduced by approximately 30 per cent. as the result of a major rationalisation programme to make more efficient use of our accommodation with significant associated reductions in the Department's overall energy usage.

The Department has implemented a number of energy efficiency initiatives since the target was published. The main strategy is to gain efficiencies as a result of the estate strategy to reduce the physical size of the estate and the number of buildings combined with continuing investment in the remaining buildings in energy efficiency projects to improve lighting and environmental controls as well as occupant awareness.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of electricity used by buildings in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies has come from renewable sources in each year from 1997. [16258]

Alan Johnson: The Department purchases electricity from renewable sources equating to an average of 32.3 per cent. for the period 1999–2000 to 2004–05, for its HQ estate requirement compared to a target of 10 per cent. by 2008.

	Percentage electricity from renewable source
1997–98	Not bought
1998–99	Not bought
1999–2000	26
2000–01	26
2001–02	34
2002–03	36
2003–04	35
2004–05	37

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of electricity used by buildings in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies has come from renewable sources in each year since 1997. [16260]

Alan Johnson: The Department purchases electricity from renewable sources equating to an average of 32.3 per cent. for the period 1999–2000 to 2004–05, of its HQ estate requirement compared to a target of 10 per cent. by 2008.

	Percentage electricity from renewable source
1997–98	Not bought
1998–99	Not bought
1999–2000	26
2000–01	26
2001–02	34
2002–03	36
2003–04	35
2004–05	37

Letter from Ron Marchant to Mr. Edward Davey, dated 10 October 2005:

House of Commons Parliamentary Question: 2005/1063

I am responding to this parliamentary question, tabled on 22 July 2005, regarding the proportion of electricity used by the Patent Office since 1997. During the period 1997–2003 none of the Patent Office Estate used electricity from renewable sources. Since then Concept House, the Patent Office Headquarters and Main building, uses 100% "green" electricity. The remainder of the estate are still using electricity from fossil fuels.

Letter from Claire Clancy to Mr. Edward Davey, dated 10 October 2005:

I am responding to your recently tabled Parliamentary Questions to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on behalf of Companies House, which is an Executive Agency of the DTI.

The annual spend by Companies House on electricity up until April 2000 and water and sewerage until April 2001 is not readily available due to a change in monitoring procedures. Figures from 2000 to 2005 for Cardiff, and from 2004 when we opened our Nantgarw office are as follows:

April to March	*Cardiff*	*Nantgarw*
Electricity		
2000–01	203,732	n/a
2001–02	190,830	n/a
2002–03	158,510	n/a
2003–04	175,791	n/a
2004–05	214,850	50,677
Water and sewerage		
2001–02	42,207	n/a
2002–03	27,268	n/a
2003–04	17,899	n/a
2004–05	20,963	899

Our Cardiff office has been a 100 per cent. renewable electricity source since July 2004, and our Nantgarw offices is just at the end of the first year of brown energy. We are however negotiating to have it moved to green energy from October 2005.

Letter from Desmond Flynn to Mr. Edward Davey, dated 10 October 2005:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply to you directly on behalf of The Insolvency Service in respect of your question (1063/2005) asking what proportion of the electricity used in this agency's buildings has come from renewable sources in each year since 1997.

The Insolvency Service has not yet bought electricity from renewable sources because it is more expensive than electricity available from other sources. It does not therefore represent value for money. My agency has however installed photovoltaic cells on the roof of our headquarters building here at Bloomsbury Street. Electricity generated by these cells currently accounts for 2.5% of our annual use at this building. The Insolvency Service is therefore making a significant contribution in this way to the sustainable development agenda.

Letter from Dr. Jeff Llewellyn to Mr. Edward Davey, dated 10 October 2005:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply on behalf of the National Weights and Measures Laboratory (NWML) to your question regarding the proportion of electricity used by Agency buildings that has come from renewable sources, in each year since 1997.

The National Weights & Measures Laboratory (NWML) operates on the same site as the National Physical Laboratory (NPL) at Teddington. Since 1996 the operations of NPL have been subject to a Management Contract run by NPL Management. Historically, NWML has always paid NPL for its share of the electricity costs and benefits from economies of scale associated with the NPL Electricity Contract. We are invoiced by NPL Management, and do not see the invoice from the electricity supplier. NPL Management has told us that the invoice from the supplier does not give any indication what percentage of electricity comes from renewable sources.

Equality and Diversity

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much the Department has spent promoting equality and diversity in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [14658]

Meg Munn: The Department is fully committed to the equality and diversity agenda and has policies and processes in place to ensure that there is no unfair discrimination on any grounds.

The cost of providing information relating to every diversity and equality event held in the Department over the last five years is not readily available and can be obtained only at a disproportionate cost. As much of the departmental diversity training is integrated into all other training the entire cost for that element cannot be calculated.

The following costs are extracted (where figures are available-from 2001 only) from the Department's training providers and HR Diversity/Equality training events:

£

Event	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*Total cost*
Diversity training (various)	6,580	11,220	8,287	9,400	66,485	101,972
Equal opportunities action plans:	—	—	13,895	70,838	53,044	137,777
Cabinet office disability bursary scheme	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	20,000	28,000
Diversity week	10,000	25,000	—	—	—	35,000
Valuing ability mentoring programme- for people with disabilities	—	—	—	10,000	10,000	20,000
Childcare/nursery scheme	n/a	n/a	30,957.16	95,096.23	60,338.96	186,392.35
Conferences for disability/ethnic/lesbian/gay staff	n/a	n/a	25,000	7,000	n/a	32,000
Specialist equipment for disabled staff	n/a	n/a	17,857.80	73,407.98	30,659.53	121,925.31

Grocery Trade

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many representations his Department has received in 2005 from *(a)* members of the public and *(b)* individual companies on (i) Tesco's market share, (ii) mergers and acquisitions in the grocery trade and (iii) the Retailer Code of Practice; and if he will make a statement. [16862]

Mr. Sutcliffe: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and Ministers at the DTI have received a considerable number of representations from members of the public, pressure groups and companies on the structure of the grocery market and the Supermarket Code of Practice.

Competition in the supermarket and grocery sectors is a matter for the independent competition authorities, in this case the Office of Fair Trading (OFT). On mergers, the OFT's role is to refer situations where it believes there is likely to be a substantial lessening of competition to the Competition Commission (CC). It is for the CC to decide whether the merger should be allowed to proceed. The OFT assesses each merger on a case by case basis, so it is not possible to say whether any future mergers will be referred to the CC.

The Supermarkets Code of Practice (the Code) only concerns transactions between supermarkets and their direct suppliers. Asda, Sainsbury's and Tesco are statutorily bound by the Supermarkets Code while Morrisons has volunteered to abide by it. The OFT reviewed the operation of the Code in 2003–04 and again in 2005. On 3 August they published a report on the final outcome of their 2005 review. This is available on their website at http://www.oft.gov.uk/News/Press+releases/2005/146-05.htm

Industrial Tribunals

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many cases were brought against each local authority dealt with by industrial tribunals in the last year for which figures are available; and how many were successful. [15833]

Mr. Sutcliffe: In 2004–05 86,181 claims were brought to an employment tribunal. The Employment Tribunals Service does not collate statistics on the number of claims brought against specific respondents, such as local authorities, nor how many of these were successful.

Matched Funding

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to his answer of 22 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1088W, on matched funding, how much of the funding came from the Government in each year. [15656]

Alun Michael: The responsibility for identifying and securing match funding for projects supported by the European Structural Funds rests with the project sponsor. Although the Government provide a significant proportion of the match funding referred to in the answer of 22 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1088W, the Government's contribution is only recorded at project level and an overall figure could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Patent Applications

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many patent applications have been subject to secrecy orders in each of the last 10 years; and how many have subsequently been declassified. [15377]

Alan Johnson: A table of the figures requested is provided as follows. To put the figures in context, the Patent Office received 29,835 patent applications in 2003 and 28,223 in 2004.

Patent applications

	UK originated applications	*Foreign applications*	*Total applications*	*Declassified*
1996	87	25	112	6
1997	64	33	97	13
1998	51	19	70	21
1999	94	37	131	53
2000	67	20	87	43
2001	86	16	102	39
2002	117	10	127	46
2003	90	15	105	33
2004	73	4	77	26
2005[1]	32	4	36	6
Total	761	183	944	286

[1] To July.

Petroleum/Oil Supplies

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the effects on competition in petroleum retailing of adopting a refiner importer system for oil stocking arrangements. [16296]

Malcolm Wicks: The UK meets its international obligations to hold stocks of oil for use in the event of disruption of supplies by imposing obligations on commercial companies. We have always aimed to set obligations so as to impose an equal additional burden on different parts of the industry as far as possible. We intend to continue doing so under our proposed new system where the obligations will be based on products from refineries or entering the UK as imports.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations he has received relating to compulsory stocking arrangements for oil and petroleum. [16297]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department held a public consultation last year seeking views on the future of the UK system for holding emergency stocks of oil in the event of a major international supply disruption. We received 14 responses from refiners, importers, retailers and other affected sectors. We are working closely with the industry to agree a system which will continue to be robust in future as the UK's obligations to hold emergency stocks increase as we become a net importer.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the merits of a not-for-profit agency to administer oil storage obligations; and if he will make a statement. [16308]

Malcolm Wicks: The UK meets its international obligations to hold stocks of oil for use in the event of disruption of supplies by imposing obligations on commercial companies. The release of stocks following Hurricane Katrina has shown that the UK system works well.

As part of the recent public consultation on the future of the UK system, members of the industry have proposed a system where they would work collectively through an agency to ensure that the stocking obligations are met. We have agreed to work with the industry in considering the long-term potential of this solution.

Phoenix Fund

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what grants have been made to *(a)* Leeds and *(b)* Leeds West from the Phoenix Fund. [15936]

Alun Michael: The Phoenix Fund has provided a total of £250,000 for activities wholly in Leeds. It is not possible to identify separately the proportion of that funding that relates to Leeds West.

In addition, the fund has provided £1,470,180 for activities that have included Leeds, although not exclusively. It is not possible to identify separately the proportion of that amount that relates to Leeds or Leeds West.

Post Offices (Hemel Hempstead)

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the future of local post offices in Hemel Hempstead constituency. [16080]

Barry Gardiner: Decisions relating to the future of individual post offices are an operational matter for Post Office Ltd.

Regional Government

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which *(a)* non-departmental public bodies and *(b)* executive agencies within the remit of his Department have regional offices based on the Government Offices for the Regions' regional structure; and when the regional offices were established in each case. [15195]

Alun Michael: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to her question on 23 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 824.

Retailer Code of Practice

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research his Department has *(a)* commissioned, and *(b)* evaluated on the effectiveness of the Retailer Code of Practice. [16863]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Competition in the supermarket and grocery sectors is a matter for the independent competition authorities. In this case the Office of Fair Trading (OFT). The Supermarkets Code of Practice (the Code) was introduced following the Competition Commission's (CC) report on "Supermarkets: a report on the supply of groceries from multiple stores" (published 10 October 2000). The Supermarkets Code only concerns transactions between supermarkets and their direct suppliers. Asda, Sainsbury's and Tesco are statutorily bound by the Supermarkets Code while Morrisons has volunteered to abide by it.

The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) reviewed the operation of the Code in 2003–04 and again in 2005. On 3 August they published a report on the final outcome of their 2005 review. This is available on their website at http://www.oft.gov.uk/News/Press+releases/2005/146-05.htm.

Service Liberalisations

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what consultations his Department has had with *(a)* other EU member states, *(b)* the European Commission and *(c)* the European Trade Commissioner, with regard to the EU offer of service liberalisations to the World Trade Organisation; [16865]

(2) if he will place in the Library *(a)* the EU offer of service liberalisations being tabled to the World Trade Organisation by 31 May and *(b)* UK submissions to that offer. [16867]

Ian Pearson: The EC revised offer was tabled in the WTO on 2 June 2005. The offer may be accessed online on the DG-Trade website at the following website address—http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/issues/sectoral/services/wto_nego/index_en.htm

I will place a copy of the EC revised offer in the Libraries of the House.

In the months leading up to the tabling of the revised offer, there were extensive discussions in the Article 133 Committee in Brussels on the preparation of the revised offer. These discussions involved the Commission and all member states and final version submitted to the WTO takes account of comments received from the UK and other member states on the draft.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will take steps to ensure that future UK submissions for EU offers to the World Trade Organisation will be subject in advance to scrutiny by either the Trade and Industry Select Committee or the European Scrutiny Committee; and if he will make a statement. [16868]

Ian Pearson: Under the Common Commercial Policy, the European Commission has the right of initiative in respect of trade policy. It consults all EU member states on its proposals, both through formal meetings and informal discussions, and reflects the comments it receives in the submissions it makes to the WTO.

To avoid the risk of undermining the community's negotiating position it is not the Government's policy to provide for advance parliamentary scrutiny of UK submissions on EU negotiating positions within the WTO. However, the Government ensures that the WTO negotiating process is as transparent as possible by other means such as ministerial statements on the outcome of important WTO meetings and by contributing to inquiries by committees of both Houses on WTO matters (for example, the Department of Trade and Industry has made a full contribution to the current inquiry by the Trade and Industry Select Committee into the WTO's Services and NAMA negotiations). Furthermore, proposals for community legislation relating to WTO agreement are subject to parliamentary scrutiny under the existing scrutiny arrangements for EU legislation.

State Aid

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the occasions since 1 May 1997 when the Government have been challenged in European Courts over state aid; and which cases the Government won. [16068]

Ian Pearson: There have been no direct challenges to the UK Government on state aid in the European Courts since 1 May 1997.

Statutory Paid Holiday

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what assessment he has made of the effect on *(a)* UK business and *(b)* worker productivity of increasing the minimum amount of statutory paid holiday available to workers in the UK to 20 days per year, exclusive of bank holidays; [16652]

(2) when he plans to introduce legislation to increase the minimum amount of statutory paid holiday available to workers in the UK to 20 days per year, exclusive of bank holidays. [16653]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government announced in the manifesto "we have introduced, for the first time, an entitlement for every employee to four weeks' paid holiday, and we propose to extend this by making it additional to bank holiday entitlement." This will be on a pro-rata basis for those working part-time.

As announced by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on 14 September, we are taking a power in the forthcoming Work and Families Bill to enable us to put this commitment into effect. A full and extensive consultation with stakeholders, in line with better regulation principles, will be undertaken before making formal proposals.

We will of course publish an initial Regulatory Impact Assessment when the Bill is introduced, but there are likely to be a range of alternatives or variations emerging during consultation.

Sustainable Development

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether his Department's procurement policy includes timber used on and in the construction of departmental building projects; and if he will make a statement. [16252]

Alan Johnson: The DTI HQ estate incorporates green procurement policies in the sourcing of timber and timber products when used on and in the construction of departmental building projects.

All construction timber and timber products are procured specifying the point of origin must be from a sustainable source and certified as FSC or similar.

Tariffs

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the average most favoured nation tariff *(a)* applied by the EU on imports from and *(b)* applied on EU exports to each of its significant trading partner countries is. [15424]

Ian Pearson: The information requested is shown in the following tables.

Weighted average tariffs applied by the EU on imports from its main trade partners—2003

Percentage

	MFN	*Effectively applied*
United States	2.0	2.0
China	4.1	2.4
Switzerland	2.4	0.2
Japan	4.0	4.0
Russian Federation	1.1	0.5
Norway	1.6	0.2
Turkey	8.1	0.1
Korea, Rep.	3.6	3.6

Source:
WITS database

Weighted average tariffs applied by the EU's main trade partners—2003[1]

Percentage

	MFN	*Effectively applied*
United States	2.1	2.1
China	8.7	8.7
Switzerland	0	0
Japan	3.6	3.6
Russian Federation	8.8	8.8
Norway	0.7	0.4
Turkey	4.5	0.4
Korea, Rep.	8.1	8.1

[1] Korea and Russia 2002.

Source:
WITS database

Telephone Inquiries

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what facilities his Department has to deal with telephone inquiries in *(a)* Welsh, *(b)* Scots Gaelic and *(c)* Irish Gaelic. [14727]

Alan Johnson: The Department of Trade and Industry has a contract with an external telephone translation service that enables it, by means of a three-way conference call, to handle telephone calls in Welsh, Scots Gaelic and Irish Gaelic.

Telephone Numbers

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what assessment has been made of the likely impact Ofcom's proposed changes to *(a)* the 0870 number range and *(b)* 0845 numbers could have on those industries which rely on these number ranges to fund or subsidise the cost of providing other services to consumers; [15007]

(2) what assessment has been made of the likely impact Ofcom's proposal to remove revenue sharing of the 0870 number range will have on the Number Translation Service industry; [15008]

(3) what assessment has been made of the likely impact Ofcom's proposal to maintain the current price per minute rates for 0845 numbers for a two year period will have on internet service providers' ability to take advantage of British Telecom's next generation network roll-out; [15009]

(4) if he will bring forward measures to *(a)* help consumers understand the pricing of calls to Number Translation Services and *(b)* ensure providers who charge more than the standard fixed line rate make a pre-announcement to consumers using their services. [15010]

Alun Michael: The matter raised is the responsibility of the Office of Communications (Ofcom). Ofcom is the independent regulator for the communications sector, deriving its main powers and duties directly from statute rather than by delegation from my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, and accountable to Parliament in its own right. Accordingly, my officials have asked the chief executive officer of Ofcom to reply to the hon. Member and to send me a copy of his response. Copies of the chief executive's letter will also be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Timber Procurement

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the refurbishment projects in his Department that *(a)* are in progress and *(b)* will start in the next six months; what action is being taken to ensure that timber for these projects will be procured from legal and sustainable sources; and whether guidance will be issued to contractors on each of these projects to ensure that the timber used on site during refurbishment also comes from legal and sustainable sources. [16253]

Alan Johnson: My Department is currently undertaking a programme to rationalise its central London Estate, which includes refurbishment and improvements to offices at 151 Buckingham Palace road, Kingsgate House and 10 Victoria street in SW1. This will allow the DTI to reduce its accommodation by approximately 30 per cent.

The DTI HQ estate incorporates green procurement policies in the sourcing of timber and timber products when used on and in the construction of departmental building projects.

All construction timber and timber products are procured specifying the point of origin must be from a sustainable source and certified as FSC or similar.

UK Tyre Manufacturers

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many UK tyre manufacturers have relocated to bases in *(a)* Eastern Europe, *(b)* China and *(c)* South Korea in each year since 1997. [14639]

Ian Pearson: The Department does not keep comprehensive records of company relocations.

Unwanted Text Messages

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what facilities are available for people to report unwanted text messages advertising goods and services. [16036]

Alun Michael: The Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003, which came into force in the UK on 11 December 2003, introduced statutory controls on unsolicited direct marketing text messages. The rules require that unsolicited direct marketing text messages shall only be sent with the prior consent of the addressee unless they have previously given a mobile number to the sender in the context of purchasing a product or service.

The Information Commissioner has responsibility for the enforcement of the regulations and considers complaints about breaches. A breach of an enforcement notice is a criminal offence subject to a fine of up to £5000 in a magistrates court. Complaints can be directed to the Information Commissioner's Office at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF, Telephone: 01625 545 700, Fax: 01625 524 510, Email: mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk and further information is available at www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk or the Libraries of the House.

Utility Costs

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on (i) electricity use and (ii) water and sewerage services in each year since 1997. [16261]

Alan Johnson: The running costs for DTI HQ estate in respect of electricity, water and sewerage since 1997 is based on available information. The figures are as follows:

£000

	Electricity	*Water and sewerage*
2003–04	957	90
2002–03	942	137
2001–02	855	137
2000–01	929	171
1999–2000	1,036	165
1998–99	917	151
1997–98	1,065	Not available

Letter from Ron Marchant to Mr. Edward Davey, dated 10 October 2005:

I am responding to this parliamentary question, tabled on 22 July 2005, regarding the annual spending by the Patent Office on electricity and water and sewerage from 1997. The answer is attached.

	1996–97	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*
Electric					
Government Buildings	50,263.53	38,852.91	29,278.90	38,102.90	37,186.71
Concept House	151,614.59	136,510.18	131,115.58	129,185.34	120,189.06
Nine Mile Point	21,863.93	19,831.33	19,263.30	20,336.82	17,087.71
Total	223,742.05	195,194.42	179,657.78	187,625.06	174,463.48

	2001–02	*2002–003*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Electric				
Government Buildings	44,742.53	31,570.36	32,423.57	35,249.34
Concept House	130,168.49	115,206.62	117,780.42	136,191.69
Nine Mile Point	15,551.56	17,200.70	19,175.72	20,502.34
Total	190,462.58	163,977.68	169,379.71	191,943.37

	1996–97	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–001*
Water					
Government Buildings	35,114.01	43,408.46	9,582.51	19,469.81	14,775.21
Concept House	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Nine Mile Point	2,416.46	1,558.75	1,032.05	880.01	227.74
Total	37,530.47	[1]44,967.21	10,614.56	20,349.82	15,002.95

	2001–02	2002–003	2003–04	2004–05
Water				
Government Buildings	23,511.00	14,152.37	22,968.06	26,939.27
Concept House	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Nine Mile Point	915.70	1,039.83	1,077.72	716.50
Total	24,426.70	15,192.20	24,045.78	27,655.77

[1] Includes overpayment which was credited in 1998–99.

The Concept House water and sewage is part of the service charge paid to ONS who pay the rate for the whole site the Patent Office share is usually about £1,900 per month.

Letter from Iain MacGregor to Mr. Edward Davey, dated 10 October 2005:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply on behalf of the National Weights and Measures Laboratory (NWML) to your question regarding annual spending on (i) electricity use and (ii) water and sewerage services in each year since 1997.

NWML spend on electricity for the period 2000–2005

	£000
2000–01	26
2001–02	18
2002–03	14
2003–04	18
2004–05	56

Note:
Figures for 1997–2000 are not easily available.

Charges in respect of water and sewerage services are included in service charges to the managers of the Teddington site on which NWML sits.

Letter from Desmond Flynn to Mr. Edward Davey, dated 10 October 2005:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply to you directly on behalf of The Insolvency Service in respect of your question (965/2005) asking about annual spend by the agency on (i) electricity use and (ii) water and sewerage services in each year since 1997.

The figures are as follows:

	£	
	Electricity	*Water*
2004–05	230,245	26,662
2003–04	229,625	21,093
2002–03	198,948	18,910
2001–02	204,446	19,917
2000–01	238,856	19,515
1999–2000	192,878	21,290

This data excludes any spend on these utilities that might be included in a landlord's service charge.

Figures before 1999–2000 are no longer available.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the annual spending by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies has been on (i) water and sewerage services and (ii) electricity use in each year since 1997. [16281]

Alan Johnson: The running costs for DTI HQ estate in respect of electricity, water and sewerage since 1997 is based on available information. The figures are as follows.

	£000	
	Electricity	*Water and sewerage*
2003–04	957	90
2002–03	942	137
2001–02	855	137
2000–01	929	171
1999–2000	1,036	165
1998–99	917	151
1997–98	1,065	n/a

Letter from Ron Marchant to Mr. Alan Reid, dated 10 October 2005:

I am responding to this parliamentary question, tabled on 22 July 2005, regarding the annual spending by the Patent Office on electricity and water and sewerage from 1997.

The answer is attached.

	1996–97	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*
Electric				
Government buildings	50,263.53	38,852.91	29,278.90	38,102.90
Concept House	151,614.59	136,510.18	131,115.58	129,185.34
Nine Mile Point	21,863.93	19,831.33	19,263.30	20,336.82
Total	223,742.05	195,194.42	179,657.78	187,625.06
Water				
Government buildings	35,114.01	[1]43,408.46	9,582.51	19,469.81
Concept House	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Nine Mile Point	2,416.46	1,558.75	1,032.05	880.01
Total	37,530.47	44,967.21	10,614.56	20,349.82

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Electric					
Government buildings	37,186.71	44,742.53	31,570.36	32,423.57	35,249.34
Concept House	120,189.06	130,168.49	115,206.62	117,780.42	136,191.69
Nine Mile Point	17,087.71	15,551.56	17,200.70	19,175.72	20,502.34
Total	174,463.48	190,462.58	163,977.68	169,379.71	191,943.37
Water					
Government buildings	14,775.21	23,511.00	14,152.37	22,968.06	26,939.27
Concept House	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Nine Mile Point	227.74	915.70	1,039.83	1,077.72	716.50
Total	15,002.95	24,426.70	15,192.20	24,045.78	27,655.77

[1] Includes overpayment which was credited in 1998–99

Note:
The Concept House water and sewage is part of the service charge paid to ONS who pay the rate for the whole site the Patent Office share is usually about £1,900 per month.

Letter from Claire Clancy to Mr. Alan Reid, dated 10 October 2005:

I am responding to your recently tabled Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on behalf of Companies House, which is an Executive Agency of the DTI.

The annual spend by Companies House on water and sewerage until April 2001 and electricity until April 2000, is not available due to a change in monitoring procedures. Figures from 2000 to 2005 are as follows:

	£
Water and sewerage	
April 2001-March 2002	42,207
April 2002-March 2003	27,268
April 2003-March 2004	17,899
April 2004-March 2005	21,887
Electricity	
April 2000-March 2001	203,732
April 2001-March 2002	190,830
April 2002-March 2003	158,510
April 2003-March 2004	175,791
April 2004-March 2005	265,527

Letter from Iain MacGregor to Mr. Alan Reid, dated 10 October 2005:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply on behalf of the National Weights and Measures Laboratory (NWML) to your question regarding annual spending on (i) electricity use and (ii) water & sewerage services in each year since 1997.

NWML spend on electricity for the period 2000–05 was:

	£
2000–01	26,000
2001–02	18,000
2002–03	14,000
2003–04	18,000
2004–05	56,000

Figures for 1997–2000 are not easily available.

Charges in respect of water & sewerage services are included in service charges to the Managers of the Teddington site on which NWML sits.

Letter from Desmond Flynn to Mr. Alan Reid, dated 10 October 2005:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply to you directly on behalf of The Insolvency Service in respect of your question (1014/2005) asking about annual spend by the agency on (i) water and sewerage services and (ii) electricity use in each year since 1997.

The figures are as follows:

		£
	Water	*Electricity*
2004–05	26,662	230,245
2003–04	21,093	229,625
2002–03	18,910	198,948
2001–02	19,917	204,446
2000–01	19,515	238,856
1999–2000	21,290	192,878

This data excludes any spend on these utilities that might be covered in a landlord's service charge.

Figures before 1999/00 are no longer available.

Video-conferencing Units

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many video-conferencing units are installed in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each agency of the Department; what percentage of offices have these facilities in each case; and what plans there are to increase the number of such units. [16147]

Alan Johnson: There are a total of 22 video conferencing systems deployed across the Department's offices. 65 per cent. of the Department's offices have video conferencing systems installed including all the main HQ buildings. There are no plans to purchase additional video conferencing units.

Letter from Ron Marchant to Mr. Alan Reid, dated 10 October 2005:

House of Commons Parliamentary Question: 2005/993

I am responding to this parliamentary question, tabled on 22 July 2005, regarding How many video-conference units are installed within each agency of the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry's Department.

The Patent Office has 2 Video Suites, 1 in Concept House Newport, the other in Harmsworth House, London. There are no plans to increase the number of Video Conferencing units that we have as current facilities fully meet our requirements.

Letter from Desmond Flynn to Mr. Alan Reid, dated 10 October 2005:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply to you directly on behalf of The Insolvency Service in respect of your question (993/2005) about video-conferencing. You were asking how many video-conferencing units are installed in the agency, what percentage of its offices have such facilities, and what plans there are to increase the number of such units.

The Insolvency Service has video-conferencing units installed at both of its headquarters buildings—21 Bloomsbury Street in London and Ladywood House in Birmingham. There are no units installed in the other 35 offices used by the agency. Therefore while video-conferencing units are installed in around 6% of the agency's offices, 40% of the agency's staff are accommodated in the two buildings which have them.

At present there are no plans to increase the number of these units.

Letter from Claire Clancy to Mr. Alan Reid, dated 10 October 2005:

I am responding to your recently tabled Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on behalf of Companies House, which is an Executive Agency of the DTI.

Companies House has four offices in total. Our headquarters in Cardiff office has two video-conferencing units, our Nantgarw office has one, as does our Edinburgh office. We do not have a unit in our London office, and have no plans to increase the number in any of our offices.

Letter from Iain MacGregor to Mr. Alan Reid, dated 10 October 2005:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply on behalf of the National Weights and Measures Laboratory (NWML) to your question regarding the number of video

conferencing units installed at NWML, & whether there are plans to increase the number of such units.

NWML has no video conferencing units installed, with no plans to install such a unit. Thus NWML submits a nil return.

Watermark Project

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether his Department has joined the Watermark project. [16144]

Alan Johnson: Whilst the DTI is not currently a member of the Watermark project we have put in place all the appropriate measures of benchmarking usage, measurement of performance, reporting of data, consumption and invoicing verification. The Department's management of its water usage is incorporated into its environmental management system.

Overall the DTI HQ estate has experienced a reduction in total water consumption between April 2002 and March 2005 of 34 per cent. and a reduction in consumption per capita of 20 per cent.

Welsh Legislation

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how he intends to implement Paragraph 3.12 of the White Paper, "Better Governance for Wales" (Cm 6582), in respect of any Bill he introduces in the current Session of Parliament. [14948]

Barry Gardiner: The DTI intends to implement the Government's policy as stated in paragraph 3.12 of the White Paper "Better Governance for Wales" Cm 6582. The Department is in discussion with the Assembly Government on the issues concerned.

Wind Energy

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what relative priority the Government places on financial support for wind energy options as compared with *(a)* other renewable options including nuclear power and *(b)* conventional energy options; and if he will make a statement. [15696]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government's main mechanism for supporting renewable energy is the Renewables Obligation. The Renewables Obligation, which requires electricity suppliers to source a proportion of their electricity sales from eligible sources of renewable energy, is technology neutral. However, as a market-based mechanism, the Obligation rewards the most cost effective renewable energy sources. As wind energy is the most economically competitive form of renewable technology with scope for expansion, it is likely that most new renewable capacity between now and 2010 will be wind generation (both onshore and offshore).

Information on DTI and Research Council expenditure on renewables, clean fossil fuels and nuclear was set out in my reply, on 1 September 2005, *Official Report*, columns 2262–68W, to the hon. Member for Leominster (Bill Wiggin).

Nuclear power is not a renewable source of energy.

SCOTLAND

European Contractors

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the contractors based in other EU member states that are providing services to his Department. [15446]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office currently has no services provided by contractors based in other EU member states. The Office awards all contracts in line with the UK's objective of achieving value for money, and in line with EU treaty obligations on transparency and free movement of goods and services.

Freedom of Information

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many Freedom of Information Act 2000 requests have been answered by the Department; and in how many cases *(a)* information was wholly exempted, *(b)* information was partly exempted and *(c)* the requests were answered in full. [14962]

David Cairns: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend, the Minister of State at the Department for Constitutional Affairs, on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2248W.

Media Relations

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much the Department has spent on external media relations in each of the last 12 months. [14684]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office has incurred no expenditure on external media relations in the last 12 months.

WALES

Correspondence

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what his Department's policy is for dealing with and responding to correspondence received in *(a)* Welsh, *(b)* Scots Gaelic and *(c)* Irish Gaelic. [14699]

Mr. Hain: In accordance with the Welsh Language Act 1993, the Wales Office has a Welsh Language Scheme. Under the terms of the scheme, when someone writes to, or e-mails, us in Welsh, we reply in Welsh. The target time for replying to correspondence in Welsh, and the type of reply sent, are exactly the same as for correspondence in English.

With regard to Scots Gaelic and Irish Gaelic, we would make every reasonable effort to reply to correspondence in the language in which it is received.

Equality and Diversity

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much the Department has spent promoting equality and diversity in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [14655]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office is fully committed to the equality and diversity agenda and operates under the umbrella of the Department for Constitutional Affairs who have policies and processes in place to ensure that there is no unfair discrimination on any grounds.

The Wales Office staff have had available to them, since June 2003, the resources of the Department for Constitutional Affairs dedicated Corporate Diversity Team and before that the National Assembly for Wales Equality and Diversity Team, so costs are not separately identified.

European Contractors

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list the contractors based in other EU member states that are providing services to his Department. [15447]

Mr. Hain: None.

Freedom of Information

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many Freedom of Information Act 2000 requests have been answered by the Department; and in how many cases *(a)* information was wholly exempted, *(b)* information was partly exempted and *(c)* the requests were answered in full. [14961]

Mr. Hain: The Department for Constitutional Affairs publishes quarterly updates in relation to departmental performance under FOI, including information on both the volume and outcomes of requests. These reports cover all Departments of State, including the Wales Office.

The first of these updates, covering the period January to March, was published on 23 June 2005 and can be found on both the DCA website at http://www.foi.gov.uk/statsjan-mar05.htm and in the House Library. The next bulletin is due in the autumn of this year. An annual report is also to be published in early 2006.

Special Schools

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many special schools there are in Wales *(a)* in total and *(b)* in each constituency. [13296]

Mr. Hain: There are 43 special schools in Wales. A list of such schools follows. This is broken down into parliamentary constituency areas:

Constituency	*School*
Aberavon	Briton Ferry Special School
Alyn and Deeside	Ysgol Belmont
Alyn and Deeside	Ysgol Y Bryn
Blaenau Gwent	Pen-Y-Cwm Special School
Brecon and Radnorshire	Ysgol Penmaes
Bridgend	Heronsbridge School
Bridgend	Ysgol Bryn Castell
Caernarfon	Ysgol Pendalar
Caernarfon	Ysgol Hafod Lon
Caerphilly	Trinity Fields Special School
Cardiff Central	The Hollies Special School
Cardiff North	The Court Special School
Cardiff North	Meadowbank Special School
Cardiff South and Penarth	Ashgrove School
Cardiff South and Penarth	Ysgol Erw'r Delyn
Cardiff West	Riverbank Special School
Cardiff West	Woodlands High School
Cardiff Central	Ty Gwyn Special School
Cardiff North	Greenhill Special School
Conwy	Ysgol Coedmenai
Conwy	Ysgol Y Gogarth
Cynon Valley	Maesgwyn Special School
Cynon Valley	Park Lane Special School
Delyn	Ysgol Delyn
Llanelli	Heol Goffa Special School
Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney	Greenfield Special School
Monmouth	Mounton House Special School
Montgomeryshire	Ysgol Cedewain
Montgomeryshire	Brynllywarch
Neath	Ysgol Hendre Special School
Newport West	Maes Ebbw School
Pontypridd	Ysgol Ty Coch
Preseli Pembrokeshire	Portfield Special School
Preseli Pembrokeshire	Ysgol Rhydygors
Rhondda	Rhondda Special School
Swansea East	Penybryn Senior Special School
Swansea West	Ysgol Crug Glas
Torfaen	School, Sebastopol
Vale of Clwyd	Ysgol Tir Morfa
Vale of Clwyd	Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn
Vale of Glamorgan	Ysgol Maes Dyfan
Wrexham	St Christopher's School
Ynys Mon	Ysgol Bont

Telephone Inquiries

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what facilities his Department has to deal with telephone inquiries in *(a)* Welsh, *(b)* Scots Gaelic and *(c)* Irish Gaelic. [14700]

Mr. Hain: In accordance with the Welsh Language Act 1993, the Wales Office has a Welsh Language Scheme. Under the terms of the scheme, the switchboard serving our Cardiff office answers with a bilingual greeting. If the caller wishes to speak Welsh, the operator will try to connect the call to a Welsh speaker who can deal with the inquiry. If no Welsh speaker is available and able to deal with the inquiry, the caller will be given the choice of a Welsh speaker ringing back, or continuing the call in English. If the caller rings on one of our direct lines but the person taking the call cannot speak Welsh, he or she will try to transfer it to a suitable Welsh speaking colleague. Again, if no-one is available, the caller will be given the choice of a Welsh speaker calling back, or continuing the call in English. There might be times when there is no Welsh speaker available who can answer the query in full, especially if it is complex or specialised. In these cases, the caller will be given the option of discussing the matter in English or writing to us in Welsh—in which case, they would receive a written reply in Welsh. The switchboard serving our London headquarters may not have Welsh speaking staff. If they receive a call from someone wishing to speak Welsh, the operator will explain that he or she cannot speak Welsh but will offer to try to connect the caller to a Welsh speaker within the department. If none of our Welsh speakers was available, the operator would explain that this was so and offer the caller the option of continuing the conversation in English, or of leaving their details so that a Welsh speaker could ring back later. We have no facilities for dealing with telephone inquiries in Scots Gaelic or Irish Gaelic.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance the UK is providing for the reconstruction of Afghanistan. [15507]

Hilary Benn: At the Tokyo Conference in 2002, the UK pledged £200 million over five years in development assistance to Afghanistan. At the Berlin Conference in March 2004 this pledge was increased to a total of £500 million over the same time period; by mid-2005, £360 million of this had been spent.

DFID's Afghanistan programme for 2005–06 will channel £90 million in development assistance into the country. This programme focuses on three areas of work:

State-building: to address the weaknesses in state institutions and to help ensure that sustainable development can be financed and delivered;

Economic Management and Aid Effectiveness: to strengthen the public finance system;

Livelihoods: to help reduce dependence on the opium economy and to help re-generate rural economic growth. Progress on all three is essential for creating the conditions for longer-term development.

During President Karzai's recent visit to the UK (July 2005), DFID committed to provide £200 million to the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund between 2005 and 2008. This fund supports the operating costs of the Government. The UK is the largest contributor to this fund. DFID has also agreed to begin planning with the Government of Afghanistan to draw up a long-term development partnership between the two Governments.

DFID has also channelled around £160 million to Afghanistan through the European Community, the United Nations and the World Bank.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* financial, *(b)* material, *(c)* personnel and *(d)* other aid the UK Government (i) pledged, (ii) committed and (iii) delivered to Afghanistan following the drought in 2000. [15556]

Hilary Benn: Following the South Asia drought of 2000, DFID committed £3.53 million specifically to Afghanistan. Of this, £3.51 million has been fully utilised. This included: £2.2 million to the World Food Programme (WFP) to provide food assistance; £0.9 million to the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies through the British Red Cross Society; £0.2 million to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for emergency relief for internally displaced persons; £0.1 million to the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs to provide emergency shelter for people displaced by the drought and conflict; and £0.4 million to the WFP to provide food assistance to over 60,000 refugees in Pakistan who had arrived from Afghanistan. In addition, DFID provided regional assistance including £2 million to the WFP for of which £1.25 million was allocated to Afghanistan.

DFID also provided £3 million to the Afghan Government's drought appeal in September 2004 to provide drinking water to populations most in need; to rehabilitate water sources such as karezes (surface catchments) and shallow wells; and to target food distributions to the rural vulnerable in the most severely affected districts.

Africa

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what mechanisms he plans to put in place to ensure aid agreed at the G8 Summit directly benefits the African people. [15508]

Hilary Benn: The G8 agreed that additional resources will be focused on low income countries which are committed to growth and poverty reduction, to democratic, accountable and transparent Government and to sound financial management. Where this is the case, it should be up to the country concerned to decide how best to use resources to accelerate progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which are focused on reducing poverty, improving people's access to education, health, water and sanitation.

The G8 agreed on the importance of an effective monitoring mechanism to track progress and to help ensure delivery on the ground. Prime accountability is from each Government to its own citizens and Parliaments. At country level, mechanisms for monitoring and review will be strengthened. Internationally, the G8 agreed to strengthen the Africa Partnership Forum (APF) so that it can monitor progress effectively. This will be done on the basis of a joint action plan, which we hope will be agreed at the next meeting of the APF in April 2006.

Aid Conditionality

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what operational guidelines for departmental staff have been introduced to give effect to the policy set out in the publication "Partnerships for Poverty Reduction: Rethinking Conditionality"; what changes to working practices within his Department have followed the publication of this document; and if he will make a statement. [15719]

Hilary Benn: Operational guidance is being prepared, based on DFID country teams' experience of implementing the policy since its publication in March. We will consult with civil society organisations and other donors in finalising the guidance.

The policy is re-inforcing DFID's efforts to build effective partnerships for development by supporting countries to develop their own poverty reduction plans, ensuring accountability for aid, and by making aid more predictable so that countries can rely on it in planning their budgets. The policy has confirmed that DFID will not make aid conditional on specific policy decisions by partner governments (including in sensitive economic areas such as privatisation or trade liberalisation). The policy is also ensuring that new programme agreements between DFID and partner countries are clear about the shared commitments on which our aid is based, the circumstances in which aid can be withdrawn, the impact we expect from our aid, and the way in which progress will be measured.

Asian Tsunami

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* financial, *(b)* material, *(c)* personnel and *(d)* other aid the UK Government (i) pledged, (ii) committed and (iii) has delivered to tsunami-affected countries since December 2004. [15348]

Hilary Benn: To date, nearly £67 million out of the £75 million allocated by DFID to meet immediate humanitarian relief needs following the tsunami, has been programmed through United Nations agencies, the Red Cross Movement and non-governmental organisations and DFID direct action. This spending can be broken down into:

	£
Red Cross Movement	3,500,000
UN (some 40 organizations)	31,105,057
NGOs	9,724,537
DFID Indonesia Delegated Budget	8,355,489
DFID Donations in Kind	10,972,138
DFID Funded DEC Flights	2,083,126
DFID Staff Secondments	489,000
DFID Monitoring and Evaluation	165,000
DFID operations project support costs	407,000
Total	66,801,347

So far, £60 million of this has been disbursed. A Further detailed breakdown of this spending can be obtained in the document entitled "A breakdown of DFID's Immediate Relief Response to the Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami" which has been placed in the Libraries of the House. The balance of the £67 million will be drawn down by the recipient agencies as needed. The remaining £7 million out of the £75 million has been earmarked for disaster risk reduction initiatives in affected countries.

DFID has also allocated £65 million to meet reconstruction needs. From this allocation, £36 million has been committed to Indonesia, of which £6 million has so far been paid out to the Multi Donor Trust Fund. A further £2 million has been committed to Sri Lanka and £3 million to India to provide technical assistance aimed at ensuring effective, transparent and equitable programming of tsunami reconstruction efforts. The remaining £24 million of the £65 million allocation for reconstruction has not yet been programmed.

Bangladesh

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) how much *(a)* financial, *(b)* material, *(c)* personnel and *(d)* other aid the UK Government (i) pledged, (ii) committed and (iii) delivered to Bangladesh after the floods in 1998; [15559]

(2) how much *(a)* financial, *(b)* material, *(c)* personnel and *(d)* other aid the UK Government (i) pledged, (ii) committed and (iii) delivered to Bangladesh after the floods of 2004. [15346]

Mr. Thomas: Following the Bangladesh floods in 1998, DFID pledged £21 million. DFID committed a total of £22 million, which was delivered through non-government organisations, United Nation agencies and the Government of Bangladesh. We did not collate aggregate information on material or personnel within these allocations. However DFID did provide some vehicles for emergency medical care.

In 2004 DFID pledged £29 million following the floods. This consisted of an initial commitment of £10 million, and an additional commitment of £19 million to the UN consolidated appeal and rehabilitation in August and October 2004. DFID's support was delivered through UN agencies in accordance with DFID Bangladesh disaster response operating procedures (DROP-2004), direct to the Government of Bangladesh Roads and Highways Department and the Technical Co-operation programme. DFID funded relief was implemented through our partners. Relief provided from the initial £10 million consisted of food (rice, dhal, salt and oil) and non-food—medicines, corrugated iron sheets, water purification, mosquito nets, latrine repairs, transport and distribution costs for example. The £19 million consisted of medical supplies to maternal and child centres and clinics, restoration and access to safe water and sanitation facilities, shelter, cash for work to rebuild livelihoods, food and emergency repairs to damaged roads, bridges and culverts. A breakdown of these allocations is not available.

Burma

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to help provide humanitarian assistance to the internally displaced people of eastern Burma. [16521]

Mr. Thomas: The UK is the largest EU donor to Burma, with a budget of £7.4 million for 2005–06. Our country plan focuses on four key objectives: health, basic education, food security and increased prospects for successful transition to a democratic society.

DFID is helping those who are displaced in Eastern Burma by funding organisations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (£500,000), and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime in the Wa region (£170,000 to improve food security and help poor people find alternative livelihoods to opium production). DFID is also providing £1.8 million to support Burmese refugees in Thailand. The UK also provides support through the European Commission for the repatriation and re-integration of refugees, and support to displaced populations.

Reaching displaced people in Eastern Burma is a challenge because international agencies have limited access to internally displaced people living in sensitive or conflict-affected areas. The International Committee of the Red Cross has gradually increased its access within Eastern Burma over the last three years. The UK continues to work closely with international organisations such as the UN to encourage the Burmese authorities to agree to increased access for development agencies.

Central America

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* financial, *(b)* material, *(c)* personnel and *(d)* other aid the UK

Government (i) pledged, (ii) committed and (iii) delivered to Central American nations after Hurricane Mitch in 1998. [15558]

Mr. Thomas: The table shows how much financial aid DFID delivered to Central American nations from 1998 to 2001 and how much of this was specifically for disaster response relating to Hurricane Mitch:

£ million

	Total funds	Funds related to Hurricane Mitch
1998–99	20.15	2.77
1999–2000	7.96	1.61
2000–01	6.96	0.20
2001–02	5.88	0.28

DFID did not provide any material or personnel support.

Consultants

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his Department's total spending on management consultants has been in each of the last three years. [13151]

Hilary Benn: Expenditure on consultancy services was as follows:

	Cost (£ million)	Percentage of DFID budget
2001–02	211.6	7.2
2002–03	221.8	6.7
2003–04	214.6	5.4

Figures for 2004–05 are not yet available. We do not keep a central record of the spending on management consultants in particular and this information cannot be provided except by incurring a disproportionate cost. Contracts are awarded in open competition according to the ED Procurement Regulations, based on best value for money.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many consultants have been employed by his Department to investigate reproductive health issues in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available; at what cost; if he will place in the Library a copy of the reports produced by such consultants; and if he will make a statement. [14143]

Hilary Benn: DFID takes a very broad approach to sexual and reproductive health. This includes work on maternal, newborn and child health and on HIV and AIDS. DFID information systems provide data on total costs of this work, as shown in the table, without distinguishing between individual consultants and major delivery programmes contracted to consultancy firms through open competition.

A full list of the contracts can be found in the document entitled 'DFID, Reproductive Health—Contracts issued 1999–2005' of which I have arranged for copies to be deposited in the Libraries of the House. The consultancies range from individual contracts, to the funding of multi year programmes where national and international consultants work on long-term programme management and implementation in developing countries. One example of this is the Nepal Safe Motherhood Project. This complex project helped the Government of Nepal to establish and develop their National Safe Motherhood Programme through financial and technical assistance to the Ministry of Health. This programme, which ran from 1997 to 2004 at a cost of £5.8 million has improved women's access to life saving maternal health services, e.g. emergency obstetric care.

Reports are produced through these consultancies serving a number of purposes. Some are produced specifically for country governments, some for DFID monitoring requirements and others relate to specific technical issues. They are not held centrally and to provide them would incur disproportionate cost. However, the DFID website provides up-to-date links on key issues, www.dfid.gov.uk

£

Financial year	Number of Consultants	Current Value of Issued Contracts
1995–96	1	29,000
1996–97	10	3 million
1997–98	9	30.3 million
1998–99	13	9.3 million
1999–2000	13	2.3million
2000–01	17	5.9 million
2001–02	13	27 million
2002–03	15	20.5 million
2003–04	14	4.4 million
2004–05	8	60.9 million

Correspondence

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many letters to his Department from hon. Members in session *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06 remain unanswered, broken down by those which are (i) one month old, (ii) two months old, (iii) three months old, (iv) four months old and (v) over six months old. [13866]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has record of the following number of letters from Members of Parliament that remain unanswered since 2004, broken down as required:

	Number
One month old	36
Two months old	16
Three months old	4
Four months old	0
Five months old	0
Over six months old	0

The Cabinet Office, on an annual basis, publishes a report to Parliament on the performance of departments in replying to Members/Peers correspondence. The Report for 2004 was published on 6 April 2005, *Official Report*, columns 137–40WS.

Debt Relief (Less Developed Countries)

Mr. Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) whether poor

countries which receive debt relief are expected to remove impediments to domestic and foreign private investment; [16047]

(2) whether poor countries which receive debt relief are expected to promote the development of their private sectors. [16050]

Hilary Benn: Debt relief is provided to enable countries to make faster progress towards the millennium development goals. In providing debt relief under agreements such as the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) initiative, the UK abides by the HIPC standards agreed internationally. The multilateral debt stock cancellation proposed by the G8 and recently agreed at the World Bank and International Monetary Fund annual meetings also uses these standards. Private sector, investment and trade regulation reforms are sometimes part of the above processes (for example, in a poverty reduction strategy or where derived from national plans and in-country debate), but such economic policy choices would not be imposed on countries.

Mr. Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether the adjustment of gross assistance flows by poor countries is taken into account when granting debt relief to them. [16049]

Hilary Benn: In providing debt relief under agreements such as the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) initiative, the UK abides by the HIPC standards agreed internationally. The multilateral debt stock cancellation proposed by the G8 and recently agreed at the World Bank and International Monetary Fund annual meetings also uses these standards. To be eligible for such relief, a country's gross national income per capita, debt levels and national export revenues are taken into consideration, along with its macroeconomic management and commitment to poverty reduction. The level or adjustment of gross assistance flows is not considered.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what announcements his Department has made in respect of funds *(a)* pledged, *(b)* committed and *(c)* actually spent or delivered to intermediaries for (i) debt relief and write off, (ii) aid programmes and (iii) other forms of financial assistance provided in support of Government policy for the assistance of less developed countries in each of the last eight years for which records are available; [15350]

(2) what the total amount of public funds is which has been *(a)* pledged, *(b)* committed and *(c)* spent for (i) debt relief and write-off, (ii) aid programmes and (iii) other forms of financial assistance for less developed countries since the commencement of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative; and when each pledge of new public funds was announced; [15351]

(3) how much *(a)* bilateral and *(b)* multilateral (i) aid and (ii) debt relief for developing countries the UK committed (A) before and (B) after the G7 Finance Ministers Summit in London on 10 and 11 June. [15373]

Hilary Benn: The annual Departmental Report for the Department for International Development sets out the Department's current spending plans and reports on expenditure for previous years. Each report's analysis of DFID expenditure covers: bilateral aid expenditure, including all forms of direct assistance; expenditure through multilateral institutions; DFID expenditure in support of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative and the multilateral debt relief initiative, for those years in which these initiatives have been in place. The reports outline DFID's expenditure plans and do not distinguish between pledges and commitments.

DFID's Departmental Report was first published in 1999. Copies of the report from 1999 to 2005 can be found in the Library of the House. Information on DFID expenditure is to be found in: Annex 1, Table 5 of the 1999 and 2000 reports; Annex 2, Table 10 of the 2001 report; Annex 1, Table 4 of the 2002 to 2005 reports.

DFID's Departmental Report 2005 sets out its expenditure plans for 2005–06 to 2007–08. The Department's total planned expenditure on bilateral aid programmes and through multilateral institutions for the period 2005–06 to 2007–08 is set out in Table 1. This excludes the UK's share of the EC aid budget which is set against DFID's budget. It also excludes most UK expenditure on debt relief, although DFID's contribution to the HIPC Trust Fund is included. This is because most of our internationally agreed debt relief is provided on bilateral (government to government) debts held by the Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD). Bilateral debt relief that goes beyond what is required by international agreements (such as our 100 per cent. bilateral cancellation policy for HIPC) is funded by DFID. So too is multilateral debt relief, such as under the new G8 proposal and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) for non-HIPCs.

Table 1: Expenditure plans

£ million

	2005–06	*2006–07*	*2007–08*
Bilateral Expenditure	2,062	2,111	2,261
Multilateral Expenditure	1,085	1,282	1,306

The HIPC initiative provides relief and cancellation of debts owed to multilateral institutions as well as debts to bilateral governments. To date, debt relief worth $56 billion (£30 billion) in nominal terms has been agreed for 28 countries. Other countries are likely to enter the Initiative next year under its extended "Sunset clause". The World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimate that in recent years the HIPC Initiative has freed up around $1 billion a year from debt service payments for the 28 countries that have qualified under HIPC. The UK is the second largest contributor to the HIPC Trust Fund, which assists multilateral institutions with the costs of providing debt relief under HIPC. We have pledged a total of $436 million (£240 million) to the Trust Fund ($221 million, plus $88 million of the European Commission contribution in 2000, and a further $95 million, plus $32 million of an EC contribution in 2002). The UK also contributed US$43 million (£24 million) to assist the IMF with its costs of delivering HIPC debt relief.

On bilateral debt, the Government have cancelled the aid debts owed by the poorest countries (not just the HIPCs), worth some £1.2 billion since 1978. In 1999, the Government agreed to cancel 100 per cent. of bilateral debts owed by HIPC countries to the UK when these

countries completed the HIPC process. Since most aid debts had already been cancelled, these were generally export credit guarantee debts. For HIPC countries, total UK debt written off so far (to August 2005) is around £1.2 billion; this includes traditional Paris Club debt treatment, as well as the application of our 100 per cent. bilateral cancellation policy under the HIPC Initiative.

In 2000, the Government announced that it would not benefit from debt service payments from HIPC countries, and that any payments received from December 2000 would be held in trust and reimbursed to the country once it had successfully completed the HIPC process.

In 2004 the Government proposed greater relief on debts owed by countries to international institutions. The Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) began on 1 January 2005, under which we committed to pay our share, 10 per cent., of qualifying countries' debt service payments to the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank and the African Development Fund (AfDF). We expect to spend about $46 million (£25 million) on qualifying countries this financial year.

In June 2005, the G8 Finance Ministers endorsed a proposal to cancel all the remaining debts of HIPCs to the IMF, IDA and the AfDF. When agreed by the international community, the deal will be worth about $55 billion (£30 billion) in debt stock cancellations for the current 38 HIPCs. Donors will provide about $49 billion of this over the next 40 years to IDA and AfDF to compensate for foregone reflows. The cost of debt relief at the IMF ($6.1 billion) will be financed from internal resources, although the donors have committed to provide additional resources if needed to ensure that the IMF's ability to assist poor countries is not diminished. Annual resources for poverty reduction freed up by the proposal will be around $1 billion in 2007, rising to around $1.7 billion in 2010.

The precise costs to the UK of the G8 proposal are yet to finalised, but are likely to be about $6 billion (£3.3 billion) over the whole 40-year period of implementation. The G8's proposal, when agreed, will supersede the MDRI for HIPCs, although the UK will continue to meet its obligations under the MDRI to qualifying non-HIPC countries. Assistance under the MDRI is likely to be worth $184 million (£100 million) over the period to 2015 for currently qualifying countries, and up to $463 million (£256 million) if all potentially eligible countries qualify.

G8 Finance Ministers also reiterated in June their continued commitment to the full implementation and financing of HIPC. The UK already exceeds its commitments under HIPC. Our commitment to HIPC and other bilateral debt cancellation policies continue and were not altered by the G8 Finance Ministers' decisions in June.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many *(a)* press and *(b)* ministerial announcements his Department has released in each month of the last two years in which funds were (i) pledged and (ii) committed to contribute to (A) debt relief, (B) aid and (C) other programmes for less developed countries; and in which of these the Government committed itself to the spending of money not previously announced. [15352]

Hilary Benn: The table sets out the number of press releases issued by the Press Office of the Department for International Development for each month of the last two years in which the Department has pledged or committed funds to debt relief and other aid programmes. In all instances, this was the first time these commitments had been announced. Each ministerial announcement on allocation is normally supported by a press release.

Table: Number of press releases issued by DFID press office

	Debt relief commitments	Other aid commitments
2003		
July	—	1
August	—	2
September	—	—
October	—	1
November	—	—
2004		
December	—	—
January	—	3
February	—	1
March	—	4
April	—	2
May	—	5
June	—	2
July	1	—
August	—	2
September	2	2
October	—	7
November	—	—
December	—	7
2005		
January	1	4
February	1	9
March	1	1
April	—	4
May	—	4
June	—	1
July		1
August	—	1
September	—	1

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* financial, *(b)* material, *(c)* personnel and *(d)* other aid the UK Government (i) pledged, (ii) committed and (iii) delivered to the Democratic Republic of the Congo after the volcanic eruptions in 2002. [15344]

Hilary Benn: Following the eruption of the Mount Nyiragongo in January 2002, the UK disbursed £1 million immediately to agencies dealing with the disaster, and indicated its preparedness to offer more. Our bilateral financial support in response to the disaster eventually totalled £1.3 million, split as follows:

£370,000 to Merlin's Goma Emergency Response (emergency health care)

£250,000 to the British Red Cross Goma Volcano Fund

£397,000 to OXFAM through a UN flash appeal (water and sanitation)

£275,000 to Save the Children for Nyiragongo Emergency Response.

At the time of the eruptions DFID also sent two humanitarian advisers to the area to assess the situation and co-ordinate our response.

Since then, we have followed the meetings co-ordinating scientific monitoring of the volcano and development of early warning systems (which have been in place since 2004), and those assessing the humanitarian and environmental risks, including contingency planning. We currently have a humanitarian adviser visiting Goma and its vicinity, part of whose visit will be to get an update on humanitarian contingency planning and how we might help further.

Departmental Websites

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the websites that come under his Department's responsibility; what the cost was of each in the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to each site in that year. [15901]

Mr. Thomas: DFID's websites and costs for the financial year 2004–05 are as follows:

Central sites

www.dfid.gov.uk—main external site, plus DFID India (www.dfidindia.org) and DFID Bangladesh (www.dfidbangladesh.org)

Costs: £121,983

Unique visitors: 1,660,260

Developments magazine

www.developments.org.uk—website for Developments magazine

Costs: £12,283.46

Unique visitors: 45,321

Global Dimension

www.globaldimension.org.uk—Development education resources site

Costs: £99,667

Unique visitors: 63,726.

El Salvador

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* financial, *(b)* material, *(c)* personnel and *(d)* other aid the UK Government (i) pledged, (ii) committed and (iii) delivered to El Salvador after the earthquake in 2001. [15554]

Mr. Thomas: DFID provided a total of £1,327,900 financial aid to El Salvador in response to the first earthquake in January 2001. This was followed by £302,632 financial aid in response to humanitarian need in the wake of the second earthquake in February 2001. The amount dispersed was the same as that pledged and committed. DFID did not provide any material or personnel support. Since 2001 the UK Government have delivered about £1,056,440 in other bilateral aid to El Salvador.

Equality and Diversity

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much the Department has spent promoting equality and diversity in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [14662]

Mr. Thomas: DFID is fully committed to the civil service equality and diversity agenda and has policies and processes in place to ensure that there is no unfair discrimination on any grounds.

DFID's diversity strategy provides the broad framework under which our diversity and equality work is promoted and delivered across the organisation. In order to meet the specific challenges of this agenda, we have undertaken a comprehensive range of activities as detailed in the following tables. Monetary values have been assigned to each of these key activities for each of the last five financial years. Staffing costs have been derived using estimates of the time that have been allocated by DFID staff to equality and diversity issues.

Spend on diversity activities 2000–05

2000–01

Activity	*Cost (£)*
Staffing Costs	[1]39,922
Ethnic Minority Bursary Scheme (Positive Action)	10,110
National Mentoring Consortium (Positive Action)	650
Total	50,682

2001–02

Activity	*Cost (£)*
Staffing Costs	[1]87,014
Diversity Training Course (In House)	115,040
Ethnic Minority Bursary Scheme (Positive Action)	19,952
National Mentoring Consortium (Positive Action)	650
Total	222,656

2002–03

Activity	*Cost (£)*
Staffing Costs	[1]98,784
Diversity Training Course (In House)	368,593
Mentoring Scheme (In House)	17,129
Ethnic Minority Bursary Scheme (Positive Action)	22,316
Recruitment Monitoring (Equality Proofing)	8,757
Diversity Audit (Equality Proofing—Policy and procedures)	35,346
National Mentoring Consortium (Positive Action)	650
Diversity Advertising (Specialist Press)	10,530
Total	562,105

2003–04

Activity	*Cost (£)*
Staffing Costs	[1]109,086
Diversity Adviser	25,317
Diversity Training Course (In House)	408,734
Mentoring Scheme (In House)	29,118
Ethnic Minority Bursary Scheme (Positive Action)	21,644
Sponsorship of Pathways/Summer Placement Scheme/ Disability Bursary (Positive Action)	8,734
Recruitment Monitoring (Equality Proofing)	8,757
Diversity Advertising (Specialist Press)	38,255
Memberships (Employers Forum for Age—EFA, Opportunity Now)	4,526
Equal Employment Opportunities	1,175
National Mentoring Consortium (Positive Action)	650

2003–04

Activity	*Cost (£)*
Diversity Champions Group (Corporate Donation)	1,000
Civil Service Race Equality Network (Membership)	2,000
Opportunity Rights Commission (Membership)	1,116
Windsor Fellowship (Personal Development Scheme)	36,000
Total	696,132

2004–05

Activity	*Cost (£)*
Staffing Costs	[1]71,170
Diversity Adviser	50,634
Diversity Training Course (In House)	174,091
Diversity Barriers to Career Progression Study (Seminars/Consultancy)	44,929
Mentoring Scheme (In House)	932
Ethnic Minority Bursary Scheme (Positive Action)	2,081
Recruitment Monitoring (Equality Proofing)	8,757
Memberships (Employers' Forum for Age, Employers' Forum for Disability, Opportunity Now, Stonewall)	9,490
National Mentoring Consortium (Positive Action)	650
Diversity Directory (Publication)	85
Diversity Champions Group (Corporate Donation)	1,000
Civil Service Race Equality Network (Membership)	2,000
Opportunity Rights Commission (Membership)	1,293
Windsor Fellowship (Personal Development Scheme)	18,146
Diversity Strategy paper and launch	4,789
Total	390,047

2005–06 (to 30 September)

Activity	*Cost (£)*
Staffing Costs	[1]24,440
Diversity Adviser	25,317
Launching Internal Staff Networks (Women's, BME, Disability)	1,300
Ethnic Minority Bursary Scheme (Positive Action)	1,000
Memberships (Employers' Forum for Age, Employers' Forum for Disability, Opportunity Now, Stonewall)	9,490
National Mentoring Consortium (Positive Action)	650
Crossing Thresholds Programme	3,365
Total	65,562

[1] Staffing costs have been calculated using estimates of the time that has been allocated to the equality and diversity agendas by DFID staff, using average staff cost data by grade.

European Contractors

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the contractors based in other EU member states that are providing services to his Department. [15442]

Hilary Benn: The following table lists current contracts issued by DFID's central procurement function. This does not include lower value contracts issued by DFID's overseas offices of which there is no consolidated central record.

Name	*Consultant country*	*Case title*	*Beneficiary country*
@IT Audiovisual Technologies, Informatics and Telecommunications	Belgium	ICT & Education Technology Adviser: Imfundo Ghana	Ghana
Arcadis BMB	Netherlands	Modernising Social Services—Russian Federation	Russian Federation
		Eastern Cape Provincial, District and School Development Programme: South Africa	South Africa, Republic of
		Consultancy Report Russia Social Budget	Russian Federation
Art of Living[1]	Belgium	Seconded National Experts UKREP Secondment and Stagiare Programme	Belgium
Asesores De Comercio Exterior (ACE)	Spain	Trade and Development Framework Arrangements	Non-specific country
		Trade and Development Framework Contract	Non-specific country
		Poverty Analysis in Support of Government of Belize Trade Negotiations	Belize
COWI A/S	Denmark	Team Leader—Preparation of a Project Document for a Water Resources Demand Management Project	China
		Evaluation of DFID Development Assistance: Gender Equality and Woman's Empowerment	United Kingdom
		Water Resource Demand Management Programme—Start up Consultancy	China
Castalia	France	Development of a Sustainable Regulatory Capacity for the Water Sector	Guyana
Communiqorg	Netherlands	Livelihoods Connect Steering Group	United Kingdom
Copenhagen Development Consulting A/S (Copenhagen DC)	Denmark	Evaluating Co-ordination and Complementarity of CSP'S with National Development Priorities	Non-specific country
Dr. Jerzy Slawski	Poland	Guyana Water Sector Programme—Geographic Information System Expert	Guyana
EASP Limited	Portugal	Financial Management Systems and Technical Support	Uganda
Europe External Policy Advisors	Belgium	Provision of Advice on EC AID Issues	Belgium
Gabelle, Chris	Italy	Secondment of National Expert to the EC Office Liberia	Liberia

Name	Consultant country	Case title	Beneficiary country
Haley, Geoff (Mr.)	France	United Nation Relief and Works Agency Review—2005	Middle East
Holmes, Kieran (Mr.)	Ireland (Republic)	Support to the Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA)—Phase V—Project Manager	Rwanda
IPA	Netherlands	Madhya Pradesh: Support on Power Sector Reform	India
		Generalist Procurement Agents: DFID Panel of Procurement Agents	Non-specific country
ISTAT	Italy	Household Budget Survey	Albania
Instituut Clingendael	Netherlands	A Study of Peace Conditionalities and Post Conflict Reconstruction	Asia Regional
International Procurement Agency BV	Netherlands	Operation PEBU	Sierra Leone
		Procurement of Anti-TB Drugs for Revised National TB Control Programme	India
Internews Europe	France	Assistance to the Development of a Strategic Plan for the Media Sector	Rwanda
		Global Forum for Media Development—Testing and Advancing the Case for the Media Support Sector	United Kingdom
		Support to Developing Legislative and Regulatory Frameworks and Licensing Procedures—Rwanda	Rwanda
Jennings, Mary (MS)	Ireland (Republic)	Evaluation of Yemen Social Fund for Development (SFD)	Yemen, People's DR
Mathy Vanbost	Belgium	Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Adviser-The Gambia: Education Sector	Gambia, The
Millefeuille Provence	France	Enabling Agreement—Language Training	United Kingdom
PricewaterhouseCoopers (Portugal)	Portugal	Support for the Implementation of International Accounting Standards in the Mozambique Banking System	Mozambique
Ramboll Management A/S	Denmark	Social Policy Development Advice to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	Albania
		Prevention Adviser—Anti-corruption Commission	Sierra Leone
Reid, Peter (Mr.)	Italy	Professional Livelihoods Advice to UK REP ROME	Italy
Robinson, Kelly	Ireland (Republic)	Consultancy to Update the St. Helena Tourism Strategy	St. Helena
Saana Consulting OY (Ltd.)	Finland	Protection of Intellectual Property Rights	Sierra Leone
TDI Group Ltd.	Ireland (Republic)	Trade Secretariat Working Group in South East Europe	Europe Regional

[1] Three contracts Logistical Support.

European Development Fund

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the total level of support under the 8th European Development Fund was to *(a)* Zimbabwe, *(b)* Namibia, *(c)* Nigeria, *(d)* Côte d'Ivoire, *(e)* Zaire, *(f)* Burma, *(g)* North Korea and *(h)* European countries. [16070]

Hilary Benn: The European Development Fund (EDF) provides development assistance to its 77 signatories from African Caribbean and Pacific states. Burma, North Korea and European countries are not signatories and therefore are not eligible for EDF support. The other countries which received the following allocations of development assistance under the 8th EDF are: Zimbabwe: €110 million, Namibia: €52 million, Nigeria: €100 million, Côte d'Ivoire: €120 million and the Democratic Republic of Congo: €25.7 million.

Gleneagles Summit Targets

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what arrangements have been put in place to ensure that targets set in the G8 Gleneagles communiqué are *(a)* monitored and *(b)* delivered. [15253]

Hilary Benn: The G8 Gleneagles communiqué has identified the African Partnership Forum (APF) as the main monitoring mechanism to ensure follow-up of the commitments made at the G8 Summit, on the basis of a Joint Action Plan. This plan will focus on progress of the key priorities identified by African partners. The next APF meeting will take place in London in early October and will be co-chaired by the UK and Nigeria. The UK is fully committed to the APF being effective and has proposed a small secretariat, which would undertake follow-up work in between the bi-annual meetings, and prepare reports/logistics for meetings.

Haiti

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* financial, *(b)* material, *(c)* personnel and *(d)* other aid the UK

Government (i) pledged, (ii) committed and (iii) delivered to Haiti after tropical storm Jeanne and flooding in 2004. [15347]

Mr. Thomas: No specific pledges were made by the UK Government in response to the May 2004 floods and the impact of tropical storm Jeanne on Haiti. Humanitarian assistance for Haiti was provided following requests for support from humanitarian organisations responding to relief needs in the country.

Following the May floods, DFID provided support to Haiti totalling some £418,400, through the following three organisations:

World Food Programme (£159,000)—provision of food;

Action Aid (£109,400)—project support for livelihoods and water and sanitation;

Save the Children (£150,000)—provision of non-food items and education Project.

These sums were all fully disbursed to the recipient organisations in support of their relief programmes.

DFID also undertook its own assessment and monitoring of the situation and provided further support to the World Food Programme by deploying an air movement officer to help facilitate the transportation of personnel and cargo.

Following tropical storm Jeanne, DFID provided two airlifts of emergency relief supplies worth approximately £295,000 to Haiti (tents, Land Rovers, portable generators and radio communications equipment), which were received and delivered by CARE International. A further £150,089 was provided to CARE for logistics support for the tents and for clean-up operations.

In addition, DFID provided £150,000 towards the International Federation of the Red Cross's relief operations, and approximately £171,663 to the NGO Action Contre la Faim for water and sanitation work.

The total assistance provided is valued at some £766,752 and is fully disbursed.

The UK also provided approximately £180,000 of the European Commission's Humanitarian Office (ECHO)'s £1 million assistance package to Haiti after hurricane Jeanne.

DFID's Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department (CHAD) also deployed a humanitarian adviser to assess the situation and consult with partner agencies.

Aside from this humanitarian support, the UK has provided other aid to Haiti through its contributions to Haiti's interim cooperation framework, a short to medium term development programme (2004–06) supported by the Interim Government and the international donor community. The UK is contributing approximately £35 million through its share of the pledges made by the European Commission, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank.

HIV/AIDS

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the estimated number of HIV positive people is in each country in sub-Saharan Africa; what percentage of the population this represents in each case; what proportion is being treated with retrovirals; and what estimate has been made of the cost of treating all who would benefit with retrovirals. [16063]

Hilary Benn: According to the Joint United Nations Programme for HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), over 25 million adults and children were living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa at the end of 2004. DFID focuses on 16 countries in sub-Saharan Africa under its Public Service Agreement (PSA). The following table shows the adult prevalence rate and the total numbers of adults and children infected in each of these countries (UNAIDS statistics).

In June 2005, the World Health Organisation estimated that 11 per cent. of people in sub-Saharan Africa requiring anti-retroviral therapy were receiving it—leaving a further 4.7 million people in need of treatment. According to UNAIDS estimates, it would cost approximately US$ 2 billion to provide retroviral treatment to all those that need it in Africa between 2006 and 2008. The following table also shows anti-retroviral therapy coverage in each of the 16 African PSA countries.

Adult HIV prevalence, numbers of adults and children living with HIV, and numbers of adults receiving anti-retroviral therapy in African PSA countries.

	Adult (15–49) HIV prevalence rate[1] (percentage)	*Adults and children (0–49) living with HIV[1]*	*Reported number of adults receiving anti-retroviral therapy (15–49)[2]*
DRC	4.2	1,100,000	5,327
Range	(1.7–9.9)	(450,000–2,600,000)	—
Ethiopia	4.4	1,500,000	16,400
Range	(0.9–7.3)	(950,000–2,300,000)	—
Ghana	3.1	350,000	1,393
Range	(1.9–5.0)	(210,000–560,000)	—
Kenya	6.7	1,200,000	38,000
Range	(4.7–9.6)	(820,000–1,700,000)	—
Malawi	14.2	900,000	19,000
Range	(11.3–17.7)	(700,000–1,100,000)	—
Lesotho	28.9	320,000	5,000
Range	(26.3–31.7)	(290,000–360,000)	—
Nigeria	5.4	3,600,000	17,000
Range	(3.6–8.0)	(2,400,000–5,400,000)	—
Mozambique	12.2	1,300,000	10,657
Range	(9.4–15.7)	(980,000–1,700,000)	—
Rwanda	5.1	250,000	10,346
Range	(3.4–7.6)	(170,000–380,000)	—
Sierra Leone	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
South Africa	21.5	5,300,000	104,600
Range	(18.5–24.9)	(4,500,000–6,200,000)	—
Sudan	2.3	400,000	400
Range	(0.7–7.2)	(120,000–1,300,000)	—
Tanzania	8.8	1,600,000	8,300
Range	(6.4–11.9)	(1,200,000–2,300,000)	—
Uganda	4.1	530,000	63,896
Range	(2.8–6.6)	(350,000–880,000)	—
Zambia	16.5	920,000	23,000
Range	(13.5–20.0)	(730,000–1,100,000)	—
Zimbabwe	16.5	920,000	15,000
Range	(13.5–20.0)	(730,000–1,100,000)	—

[1] UNAIDS epidemiological update, December 2004

[2] WHO/UNAIDS "3 × 5" country profiles

[3] Insufficient data

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what projections his Department has *(a)* made and *(b)* received of the number of children in sub-Saharan Africa infected with HIV in each year up to 2015. [16563]

Hilary Benn: DFID relies on the joint united programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) for official figures on children affected by HIV. UNAIDS has the global mandate for collating and publishing official statistics on global and sub-Saharan African AIDS epidemics. They publish an annual epidemiological update, which outlines the status of the global and regional AIDS epidemics. However, UNAIDS does not release specific data on future projections, due to methodological constraints. As such, DFID has neither made nor received projections of the number of children infected by HIV in each year up to 2015.

The UK Government have committed to increase its spending on HIV and AIDS in developing countries to at least £1.5 billion over the next three years (2005–06 to 2007–08); a large part of this will be spent in Africa. At least £150 million has been earmarked for orphans and vulnerable children, 80 per cent. of which will be spent in Africa. For example, we are supporting UNICEF with an estimated £33 million over three years to assist the worst affected countries in east and southern Africa and some post- conflict countries, to take essential steps to develop and implement comprehensive national action plans.

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his latest estimate is of mortality rates from AIDS in developing countries; and if he will make a statement. [16061]

Mr. Thomas: The UK relies on the Joint United Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) to provide accurate AIDS statistics. According to the UNAIDS 2004 AIDS Epidemic update, the best estimate of number of people reported to have died from AIDS during 2004 ranges between 2.8 million and 3.5 million. Since the beginning of the epidemic 40 million people are reported to have died from AIDS.

AIDS is a terrible human tragedy. DFID is leading the way forward in taking action to tackle this pandemic. We are committed to spend at least £1.5 billion to 2008 to intensify AIDS-related work in the developing world. Last month the UK hosted the latest Global Fund Replenishment Conference in London. And following the historic announcement at Gleneagles in July to

> "develop and implement a package for HIV prevention, treatment and care, with the aim of as close as possible to universal access to treatment for all those who need it by 2010"

we have begun work to ensure that this will be met.

Last month the UK called an informal meeting attended by Members of the G8, developing countries, civil society, UNAIDS, the World Health Organisation, the World Bank, and UNICEF to address next steps. UNAIDS have now been tasked with taking forward the process and will be asked to report on steps taken and action required to meet these commitments at the UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS in 2006.

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what projects his Department is funding to encourage use of prophylactics in the sex industry in places of high HIV incidence; and if he will make a statement. [16062]

Mr. Thomas: Sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning, are some of the most cost-effective and beneficial health service interventions available. However, the unmet need for condoms, and other methods of family planning, is very high. The United Nations population fund (UNFPA) estimates that global condom needs for prevention of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections is around £9 billion annually. Every year there are 340 million new cases of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Most occur in young people. Many go untreated.

DFID is working to change this situation. We work with governments and others to help poor countries develop and implement their own national strategies to overturn the HIV epidemic and to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights. As for so many other aspects of basic health, improving sexual and reproductive health depends on well functioning health systems and improving the access of people to supplies such as condoms. We believe that effective HIV prevention programmes include providing universal access to sexual and reproductive health information and services including condoms. We also believe that it is important to make special efforts to ensure that those who are most vulnerable have access to these services. This includes sex workers.

DFID provides significant support for reproductive health commodities including condoms, through its country programmes and assistance to multilateral organisations such as the UNFPA. The UNFPA estimates that some one billion condoms supplied by donors were used in developing countries in 2001. Nearly half of these were provided by the UK. For the past 10 years, DFID has been the fourth largest provider of condoms, supporting the distribution of about 150 million condoms annually. We are currently looking at a sustainable long-term response to reproductive health commodity shortages with other donors, in order to provide a more predictable basis for the funding and availability of these essential supplies.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to increase awareness in the African population of sexually transmitted diseases, with particular reference to HIV. [16089]

Mr. Thomas: There is a strong link between Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and HIV infection, particularly in Africa where unsafe sex is the main mode of HIV transmission. DFID supports raising awareness as an integral part of broader approaches to STI and HIV prevention, which include other activities such as provision of sexual and reproductive health services and commodities (e.g. male and female condoms). We are also helping to remove financial, social and geographical barriers to the poorer populations, accessing information, health services and commodities; we also advocate against stigma and discrimination related to HIV.

For example, as a part of the Ugandan national HIV programme, DFID funds are used to raise awareness of STIs and HIV through AIDS information centres, youth clubs and schools, radio and newspapers.

DFID has committed to spending £1.5 billion pounds on HIV and AIDS globally over the next 3 years, the bulk of which will go to support African countries in their fight against AIDS. Raising awareness of STIs and HIV is an important part of the comprehensive approach needed.

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what reports his Department has received on the progress of the joint funded Department for International Development/Medical Research Council trial on treatment in children with HIV; and if he will make a statement. [16562]

Mr. Thomas: Funding for this trial was agreed in November 2004. The researchers are in the process of securing the necessary drug supplies, developing the trial design and protocols, with African collaborators and training African paediatricians. They will start recruitment of 1,300 children into the trial in 2006.

India

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* financial, *(b)* material, *(c)* personnel and *(d)* other aid the UK Government (i) pledged, (ii) committed and (iii) delivered to India after (A) the earthquake in 2001 and (B) the floods in 2002. [15345]

Mr. Thomas: Following the Indian earthquake in 2001, the Conflicts and Humanitarian Affairs Department of DFID committed and disbursed £6.93 million of relief through UN agencies, NGOs and other international organisations. The Conflicts and Humanitarian Affairs Department also spent £1.77 million on direct action, including: funding a search and rescue team, providing humanitarian assessments and logistical support, and providing relief supplies including tents, plastic sheeting, trauma kits and blankets.

Following the Indian floods in 2002, the Conflicts and Humanitarian Affairs Department of DFID committed and disbursed £322,269 through the International Federation of the Red Cross, Oxfam, Tearfund, and Save the Children Fund UK. Of this, £2,281 was returned due to savings made during implementation.

DFID India did not allocate funds towards flood relief in Orissa in 2002. However, some funds were provided through ongoing programmes such as the Community Based Drought Response Project (implemented by CARE) which used a portion of their allocation (£35,000) to respond to floods in three districts of Orissa: Bolangir, Gajapati, and Kandhamal.

Kenya

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* financial, *(b)* material, *(c)* personnel and *(d)* other aid the UK Government (i) pledged, (ii) committed and (iii) delivered to Kenya after the droughts of (A) 2001, (B) 2002 and (C) 2004. [15343]

Hilary Benn: The UK government pledged, committed and delivered a total of £25 million of humanitarian assistance to Kenya following the droughts of 2001, 2002 and 2004 (£15 million in 2001, £3 million in 2002 and £7 million in 2004). The bulk of this assistance (approximately 99 per cent.) was delivered in form of financial support which helped purchase and distribute food, nutritional supplements and essential medical supplies and the rest provided for technical personnel support. The UK is the second largest bilateral humanitarian donor in Kenya after the United States.

DFID in collaboration with other donors is helping the Kenyan government develop and implement a long-term national plan to tackle the problem of recurrent droughts.

Mozambique

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* financial, *(b)* material, *(c)* personnel and *(d)* other aid the UK Government (i) pledged, (ii) committed and (iii) delivered to Mozambique after the floods in 2000. [15555]

Hilary Benn: The UK Government pledged £26 million at the Rome donor conference held in response to the Government of Mozambique's appeal for assistance following the 2000 floods. Our actual expenditure was £37 million. This was composed of £10 million in additional budgetary assistance to the Government of Mozambique to compensate for revenue losses, £7 million for the reconstruction of the north-south highway and a total of £20 million channelled through United Nations agencies and NGOs to meet a range of emergency needs, including food assistance, helicopter operations, provision of water and sanitation and logistical support. Given the number of projects and agencies involved, providing the detailed breakdown requested would incur disproportionate cost.

Niger

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* financial, *(b)* material, *(c)* personnel and *(d)* other aid the UK Government (i) pledged, (ii) committed and (iii) delivered to Niger in the last 10 years for which records are available. [15349]

Hilary Benn: DFID has not had a development assistance programme with Niger during the past 10 years, but does provide significant support through multilateral channels such as United Nations agencies and the EC development programme, of which the estimated UK share amounted to £6.2 million in 2002. We have also provided debt relief, humanitarian assistance and small project support. Details are shown in the following table.

Having reached Completion Point under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative in April 2004, Niger is now benefiting from increased debt relief. From 1 January 2005 this includes multilateral debt

relief of which the cost to the UK is estimated to be around £9.035 million between now and 2015.

In February, as part of efforts to strengthen UK/France cooperation on development issues in Africa, DFID agreed to provide an initial £7 million, through the French development programme, in support of Niger's basic education policy, with particular emphasis on getting more girls into primary education.

In recent months DFID has made a significant contribution to the food crisis relief operation in Niger. Our total support of £3.25 million is among the top three contributions, and among the quickest. Our funding will contribute to the general feeding of up to 1,700,000 people, nutritional therapy for up to 60,000 malnourished children, emergency health care for up to 1,750,000 vulnerable people, and emergency livestock interventions for up to 21,000 people.

UK bilateral aid to Niger

£000

	1995–96	*1996–97*	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*
Financial aid					
Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative	—	—	—	—	—
Other Debt Relief	333	355	665	698	629
Humanitarian Assistance	13	—	—	—	—
Technical Cooperation					
Wholly Financed Personnel: Long Term	—	43	25	—	9
Consultancies	—	—	—	21	—
Other DFID assistance					
Heads of Mission Schemes	10	—	—	—	4
Joint Funding Scheme	288	69	126	150	164
Civil Society Challenge Fund	—	—	—	—	—
Total	634	467	816	870	806

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Financial aid					
Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative	—	—	126	61	2,973
Other Debt Relief	847	219	182	144	5,985
Humanitarian Assistance	—	—	—	—	13
Technical Cooperation					
Wholly Financed Personnel: Long Term	—	—	—	—	—
Consultancies	—	—	—	—	—
Other DFID assistance					
Heads of Mission Schemes	15	20	—	—	35
Joint Funding Scheme	130	108	58	58	31
Civil Society Challenge Fund	5	—	—	—	28
Total	997	347	366	263	9,053

Source:
SRSG Database

Palestine

Dan Norris: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the *(a)* organisations and *(b)* projects operating in the Palestinian Territories being (i) funded and (ii) partially sponsored by his Department. [15038]

Hilary Benn: DFID is providing funding and technical support to the following organisations operating in the Palestinian Territories:

The Palestinian Authority (PA)
The PA Central Bureau of Statistics
The PA Ministry of Planning
The Palestinian Civil Police
The Palestinian Water Authority
The Negotiations Support Unit
The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)
The World Bank.

Projects currently being funded directly by DFID are:

	£
Direct budget support to the Palestinian Authority	17.2 million over 2 years
Assistance to the Negotiations Affairs Department	9.2 million over 7 years
Support for Public Administration and Civil Service Reform	5 million over 5 years
Sustainable Management of Aquifers	3.7 million over 7 years

	£
Support to European Union Co-ordinating Office for Palestinian Police Support	1.6 million over 3 years
Support to Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics	1 million over 6 years
Support for Palestinian Pro-poor Participatory planning project	950,000 over 2 years
Support for Hydrometric Monitoring	431,000 over 3 years
Rehabilitation of Jericho Police Training Centre	225,000 over 2 years
Provision of World Bank private sector and aid co-ordination capacity	180,000 over 1 year
UNRWA General Fund	61 million over last 3 years
UNRWA external review	70,000
Support to UNRWA education management system	2.6 million over 5 years

Parliamentary Scrutiny

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to promote parliamentary scrutiny in developing countries of the terms and conditions of aid agreements entered into by the governments of those countries. [15717]

Hilary Benn: DFID recognises the important role that parliaments in developing countries can play in the scrutiny of the management of public resources, including aid agreements entered into by the respective governments.

However, DFID has not provided support specifically for parliamentary scrutiny of the terms and conditions of aid agreements but we are currently working with many African countries to support and strengthen parliamentary oversight bodies, e.g. Public Accounts Committees and Supreme Audit Institutions such as National Audit Offices. These are the key links in the formal system of financial accountability in most countries.

This support includes assistance in Malawi for strengthening the institution of parliament to have powers over state spending, the budget and taxation. In Zambia, a new multi-donor public financial management reform programme, to which DFID is contributing, includes a component to enhance a parliamentary oversight of public resource management. In Uganda, together with other donors, DFID has supported the Office for Parliamentary Development, which has helped to strengthen the parliament, including by the provision of training for parliamentarians.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to promote parliamentary oversight of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund by parliaments in developing countries. [15718]

Hilary Benn: DFID recognises the importance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank being transparent and accountable to parliaments in developing countries. Clearly, such accountability needs to be at the heart of their relationship.

The main means by which parliaments should engage with the World Bank and the IMF activities is through the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) process. This is a national strategy for development that sets the agenda, which donors, including the World Bank, should follow in each country.

In the past, parliamentary engagement in the PRS process has often been weak. However, over the past two years, DFID country offices have begun to support stronger involvement of parliamentarians in the PRS process. DFID is providing support for parliamentary engagement in Malawi and Tanzania, where an independent monitoring group was established to oversee the joint commitments made around the PRS.

At board meetings, DFID encourages the World Bank and IMF to engage with parliaments as much as possible. We also actively push for them to make more of their documents public and will continue to pursue this both at board meetings and in discussions with staff. In fact, in March this year a new World Bank disclosure policy was approved which, among other things, makes board minutes public. The World Bank is now working closely with parliamentarians in some of its borrowing member countries to involve them in the design and implementation of its lending programmes.

The World Bank Institute has a major Parliamentary Strengthening Programme. A key objective is to strengthen the capacity of parliaments to scrutinise the allocation and use of public funds, and oversee the PRS. Since it began in 1996, it has held workshops in a range of countries including Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ghana, Kenya, Indonesia and Uganda to raise awareness among parliamentarians.

The World Bank Institute has also supported the African Parliamentarians Network Against Corruption (APNAC) and the Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption (GOPAC) to encourage parliamentary scrutiny and action against corruption.

Outside the PRS, the main means of oversight is the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank. This provides opportunities for parliaments to scrutinise the World Bank and engage more deeply in development policy issues. The independent network has some 450 members from over 90 countries and facilitates direct dialogue between parliamentarians and the World Bank to achieve greater transparency of policies and practices.

Uganda

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what support the Government are providing to the peace initiative in northern Uganda led by Betty Bigombe. [15539]

Hilary Benn: The UK, in partnership with others, has provided technical, logistical and financial support for Betty Bigombe's efforts to mediate between the Lord's Resistance Army and the Government of Uganda. In total, UK financial support for Bigombe's peace initiative has so far amounted to £210,000.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development for what reasons allocated development aid is being withheld from the Government of Uganda. [15540]

Hilary Benn: In December 2004 the UK agreed a new poverty reduction budget support (PRBS) arrangement with Uganda which provides a grant of up to £145 million over three years to support the implementation of the Uganda Government's poverty eradication action plan (PEAP). We indicated at that time that £40 million would be set aside as PRBS in the financial year 2004–05.

The arrangement links budget support to reforms detailed in the PEAP. It includes criteria on Uganda's political transition to multiparty politics, which will help maintain the stability required to make progress in reducing poverty, alongside criteria relating to macro-economic and sector policies and management. All the indicators are drawn from the PEAP and are designed to ensure our support is transparent and predictable. When our last release of budget support fell due in March 2005 we were concerned by several aspects of the political transition, including that insufficient progress had been made towards establishing a fair basis for a multi-party system. We, therefore, decided to withhold £5 million out of the total of £40 million for the financial year.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps the Government have taken to facilitate economic regeneration in northern Uganda. [15546]

Hilary Benn: The conflict in northern Uganda severely disrupts normal economic activity and for the moment constrains economic recovery. Over 90 per cent. of the population in the districts that are most affected are currently displaced and dependent upon humanitarian relief. We are providing substantial humanitarian support in response to this need. In 2004–05 we provided over £11 million of emergency assistance which was channelled mainly through the World Food Programme, UNICEF and the Red Cross. In 2005–06 a further £3 million for emergency assistance has already been committed and more is planned. The UK and other donors are discussing with the Government what assistance will be required to support economic recovery in the north once the security situation has sufficiently improved.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what funding has been allocated to education and training programmes in northern Uganda in each of the last three years. [15550]

Hilary Benn: In recent years, we have provided resources for UNICEF's humanitarian programmes in northern Uganda, which includes support for emergency education provision and vocational training. In total, we provided £650,000 for UNICEF's work in northern Uganda in 2002–03, £1.62 million in 2003–04 and £1.37 million in 2004–05. It is not possible to disaggregate how these resources have been used.

In addition DFID's poverty reduction budget support (PRBS) helps the Government provide access to education and training, especially free primary education, across Uganda including in the north. DFID's PRBS expenditure in Uganda was £17.5 million in 2002–03, £30 million in 2003–04 and £35 million in 2004–05.

Venezuela

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* financial, *(b)* material, *(c)* personnel and *(d)* other aid the UK Government (i) pledged, (ii) committed and (iii) delivered to Venezuela following the floods in 1999. [15557]

Mr. Thomas: The UK Government's response following the floods in Venezuela in December 1999 was in the form of financial assistance only. £780,000 was committed to the relief exercise, of which £771,000 was delivered in the form of vouched expenditure. The funds were used to support the assistance provided by the World Health Organisation (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Red Cross and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

CABINET OFFICE

Departmental Boards of Directors

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list Government Departments which have boards of directors; and if he will make a statement. [15637]

Mr. Hutton: I have been asked to reply. All United Kingdom central Government Departments are managed by boards made up of executive members drawn from senior officials and some non-executive members. The name and structure of these boards vary across Departments to reflect individual organisational and legislative needs. Non ministerial Departments are set up by individual statues which may have prescribed structures.

A code of good practice for corporate governance in central Government Departments was introduced in August 2005 to help departments to manage their business more effectively. It is a key part of the improvements in financial and risk management, and efficiency which is being promoted across central Government Departments. I have placed a copy of the code in the Library.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what the total expenditure saved was in each of the last three years as a result of implementing recommendations by management consultancies within his Department and its predecessors. [14824]

Mr. Hutton: The Cabinet Office has not engaged management consultants in any of the last three years specifically in order to make recommendations to save money.

Government Car and Despatch Agency

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many cars the Government Car Agency has, broken down by the form of fuel used. [15836]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The responsibility for the provision of ministerial cars and drivers has been delegated under the terms of the Framework Document to the Government Car Despatch Agency. I have asked its Chief Executive Mr. Roy Burke to write to the hon. Member. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library.

Hampton Review

John McDonnell: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster whether all proposals from the Hampton Review will include comprehensive race equality impact assessments. [15510]

Mr. Hutton: The proposals contained in the Hampton Review are being taken forward by a number of different agencies across Government. In some cases, the implementation of the Hampton proposals will require a Regulatory Impact Assessment, and where appropriate those RIAs will include impacts on race equality.

Ministerial Vehicles

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what plans there are to replace cars in the ministerial fleet with cars which use alternative fuel technology. [15265]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The responsibility for the provision of ministerial cars and drivers has been delegated under the terms of the Framework Document to the Government Car Despatch Agency. I have asked its chief executive Mr. Roy Burke to write to the hon. Member. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library.

Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (1) how many complaints the Parliamentary Ombudsman has received from hon. Members in the last 12 months, broken down by constituency; [15564]

(2) how many complaints the Parliamentary Ombudsman has received since 2001, broken down by Government Department. [15565]

Mr. Hutton: All complaints to the Parliamentary Ombudsman are referred by Members of Parliament.

Details on the number of complaints made to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, broken down by Government Department, are set out in the annual reports of the Parliamentary Ombudsman, copies of which are available in the Library of the House and can also be accessed on line at www.ombudsman.org.uk.

Private Finance Initiative

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster pursuant to the answer of 13 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 112W, on private finance projects, what total value of assets and liabilities for the project is recorded on the Government Balance Sheet; what proportion of assets and liabilities is listed; what the accounting treatment is for assets and liabilities; and whether it is compatible with *(a)* generally-accepted accounting practices and *(b)* international financial reporting standards. [15964]

Mr. Hutton: I refer the hon. Member to the Cabinet Office Annual Report and Resource Accounts 2004–05 (Notes to the Departmental Resource Accounts Nos. 1—Statement of Accounting Policies; 1.16; and 27) copies of which are available in the Library.

Recycled Tyres

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (1) what the policy of the Government car service is on using recycled tyres on its vehicles; and how often this policy is reviewed; [15087]

(2) whether the Government car service plans to introduce a mandatory percentage of recycled tyres for use on its cars. [15088]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The responsibility for the provision of ministerial cars and drivers has been delegated under the terms of the Framework Document to the Government Car Despatch Agency. I have asked its Chief Executive Mr. Roy Burke to write to the hon. Member. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library.

Strategy Unit Drugs Report

Lynne Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what the reasons were for withholding parts of the Strategy Unit Drugs Report; and if he will make a statement. [16394]

Mr. Hutton: The undisclosed parts of the Strategy Unit Drugs Report were withheld under the Freedom of Information Act. Sections 35 and 36 of the Act apply to the undisclosed information as it relates to the formulation of Government policy and the free and frank exchange of views. Section 23 of the Act applies to some of the undisclosed information, as the information was supplied by or relates to bodies dealing with security matters (in this case the National Criminal Intelligence Service, NCIS).

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Cleaners' Pay

Sarah Teather: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what discussions have taken place between House officials and MITIE Cleaning and Emprise Services regarding pay of cleaners in the House; and if he will make a statement. [15139]

Nick Harvey: Since the beginning of this dispute, the authorities of the House have held a series of meetings with MITIE and EMPRISE Services and have devoted considerable time and effort in working with them to identify possible ways of increasing the pay and improving the conditions for their staff, while continuing to deliver the services detailed within the contract. This has allowed MITIE to offer a pay increase to their staff from £5.20 to £6.00 per hour funded through internal efficiency savings. The company has made it clear that where posts are lost as part of the efficiency savings, individuals will be offered transfer to other MITIE sites wherever possible. In addition, work on improved on-site accommodation for MITIE staff has now been completed. These facilities will be available for use from today.

Explanatory Notes

Mr. Ames: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will make explanatory notes to bills available online in PDF format; and if he will make a statement. [15481]

Nick Harvey: There are currently no plans to do so, in the absence of significant demand for such a service. I refer the hon. Member to the replies I have given today to his question on the availability of PDF documents on the parliamentary website.

Official Report

Mr. Ames: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will make the *Official Report* available online in PDF format; and if he will make a statement. [15478]

Nick Harvey: There are currently no plans to do so. I refer the hon. Member to the reply I have given today to his question on the availability of PDF documents on the parliamentary website.

Parliament Website

Mr. Ames: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will list the publications on the Parliament website that are available in *(a)* PDF, *(b)* HTML and *(c)* both PDF and HTML formats. [15479]

Nick Harvey: Electronic versions of publications produced by the House's printing contractor are made available on the website principally in HTML format. This covers all Hansard Products, Bills and Explanatory Memoranda, Select Committee Publications and the daily working papers of the House (The Vote Bundle) as well as other House of Commons Papers. Bills, Select Committee Reports and certain House of Commons Papers are additionally made available in PDF format. The House of Commons Members' Estimate Committee Concordance of Resolutions, House of Commons Resource Accounts, Regulatory Reform Proposals and Draft Orders, House of Commons Library Research Papers, Standard Notes and Factsheets are published in PDF format, as are Reports and POSTnotes from the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology and other miscellaneous documents.

Mr. Ames: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what steps he is taking to increase the availability of PDF documents on the Parliament website. [15480]

Nick Harvey: Material is placed on the parliamentary website primarily in HTML format, which is the preferred format for the web. PDF versions of documents are made available on the parliamentary website when it has not been possible or cost-effective to produce HTML versions, or in addition to HTML versions in response to particular and substantial demand and after consideration of any cost implications of doing so. Most recently Select Committee evidence volumes have been made available in PDF versions as well as HTML.

Sarah Teather: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what the cost was of the parliamentary website in the last year for which figures are available; and how many visits to the site there were in that year. [15954]

Nick Harvey: The parliamentary website operates across both Houses of Parliament and is made up of contributions from a number of different individual sites. Not all costs are separately identifiable, as a number of staff contribute material to the site as part of their normal duties and these costs are not quantified. Neither are available statistics about visitors analysed in the same way or over the same time periods for the various separate components. Separately identifiable cash expenditure across both Houses of Parliament for the Financial Year 2004–05 amounted to just over £502,000, of which approximately 56 per cent. was spent on electronic document publication and associated services and 21 per cent. on staff. In the same financial year, 3.8 million unique users were recorded as accessing the parliamentary publications site, there were over 370,000 visits to the Explore Parliament site and on average 400 visitors per day were recorded on the Parliament Live site. Additionally www.parliament.uk served over 29 million page requests and the EDM web database recorded some 5.4 million hits.

Recycling

Norman Baker: To ask the honourable Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission if the Commission will take steps to introduce recycling bins for glass and plastic material in communal areas and corridors outside hon. Members' offices. [15697]

Nick Harvey: There are currently no plans to introduce recycling bins for glass and plastic material in communal areas and corridors outside hon. Members' offices. Glass recycling bins suitable for use by Members and their staff are situated at the waste centres in Peers' Court and 1 Canon Row Courtyard. Bins can be also be supplied for collection of glass bottles following functions catered by the Refreshment Department, including meetings in committee rooms. For mixed types of plastics in small quantities our policy is to recover through the general waste stream. Further consideration will be given to collection of separate waste streams in office buildings, nearer the point at which they arise, subject to health and safety and fire regulations.

Susan Kramer: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what proportion of disposable cups and take-away containers purchased from the catering outlets in the Parliamentary Estate are *(a)* recyclable and *(b)* recycled; and if he will make a statement. [15897]

Nick Harvey: A high proportion of the disposable cups and take-away containers currently used by the House of Commons Refreshment Department are potentially recyclable. However, because they are all inherently contaminated with foodstuffs and there are very limited facilities for the separation of waste, there is little opportunity for effective recycling of these items other than by incineration to generate electricity, as presently happens.

The House is currently in the process of re-tendering its contract for the supply of disposable catering products. Bidders have been asked in general to propose materials and packaging that deliver environmental benefits and, specifically, to propose disposable catering cups and take-away food containers that are more readily recyclable. The waste management contract is also in the process of being re-tendered by the Parliamentary Estates Directorate and arrangements for the better separation of waste are being reviewed as part of this process.

As soon as both these contracts are in place, it is intended to set up a pilot scheme to increase the proportion of catering disposable products that are recycled.

TRANSPORT

A3

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to publish the inspector's report into the A3 Hindhead improvement scheme. [16561]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government is currently considering the inspector's report following a Public Inquiry. The inspector's report will be published with the Government's decision in due course.

A303

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the timetable is for further dualling of the A303. [15596]

Dr. Ladyman: We will consider the timing of further improvements to the A303 in the light of advice from the South West Region on the priority that they attach to such schemes within the funding allocation for major transport schemes in the South West. As outlined in our recent announcement on regional funding allocations, the region's advice is expected at the end of January 2006.

A47 Soke Parkway

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress is being made with regard to the introduction of whisper-quiet road surfacing on the A47 Soke Parkway in Peterborough. [10714]

Dr. Ladyman *[pursuant to the reply, 12 July 2005, Official Report, c. 993W]:* Quieter surfacing, in accordance with the Highways Agency's specification, will be provided on two lanes of the eastbound carriageway of the A47 Soke Parkway through the Thomas Cook Interchange in this financial year and not westbound as previously stated.

Blackwall Tunnel

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the impact on the wider road network of the Blackwall tunnel refurbishment; and if he will make a statement. [15324]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department for Transport has not undertaken any assessment of the impact on the wider road network of the Blackwall tunnel refurbishment. The Blackwall tunnel forms part of the Greater London Authority Road Network—now known as the Transport for London Road Network—and is the responsibility of the Mayor and Transport for London. Therefore, any works, including refurbishment, on that stretch of road are a matter for them. Information about the Blackwall Tunnel and its refurbishment can be obtained from:

Keith Ollier
Director of Street Management
Transport for London
Windsor House
42–50 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0TL.

Buses

Paul Rowen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total investment in quality bus corridors has been in each Passenger Transport Area in each of the last five years. [15286]

Ms Buck: The information on investment provided is based on annual returns the Department receives from local transport authorities. It does not hold records on the level of investment in quality bus corridors alone for all Passenger Transport Areas. An authority may have classified investment in quality bus corridors as a bus priority scheme or less likely as a bus infrastructure scheme. The following tables include information provided on both bus priority and bus infrastructure covering the five years of the first local transport plans.

Bus priority schemes

£000

Passenger Transport Area	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
Greater Manchester	4,743	6,589	6,484	9,099	8,572
Merseyside	697	1,158	69	12	0
West Yorkshire	774	854	1,354	1,530	1,812
South Yorkshire	2,422	4,166	3,680	4,703	5,999
West Midlands	9,598	11,839	19,702	21,945	37,775
Tyne and Wear	590	3,117	12,987	13,590	10,305

Bus Infrastructure

£000

Passenger Transport Area	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
Greater Manchester	2,130	826	1,681	1,535	1,395
Merseyside	6,884	6,292	6,462	4,016	5,308
West Yorkshire	1,962	4,664	6,128	6,056	7,295
South Yorkshire	1,568	656	549	2,684	1,377
West Midlands	505	2,656	1,993	3,162	4,381
Tyne and Wear	519	1,281	0	0	0

The figures for 2005–06 are forecast expenditure to the end of this financial year. Other bus related investment is not included in these figures.

Changing Development Partnerships

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the local authorities who are members of changing development partnerships. [15216]

Ms Buck: The Charging Development Partnership last met in August 2002. It is no longer an active forum.

Crossrail

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will take steps to ensure that London firms are given key roles in the development of Crossrail; and if he will make a statement. [15220]

Derek Twigg: Crossrail related procurement will be undertaken in accordance with the relevant legislation and the aim of obtaining value for money.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the effect on Brent residents of Crossrail; and if he will make a statement. [15255]

Derek Twigg: The Environmental Statement accompanying the Crossrail Bill shows that no construction works are proposed to take place within the London borough of Brent and no Crossrail lorry routes would use roads in the borough.

Following the opening of Crossrail, many journeys to and from Brent will be improved by the provision of interchanges between Crossrail and London underground lines that serve the borough.

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) whether a full cost benefit analysis has been made of the case for a Crossrail station at Woolwich; and if he will make a statement; [15300]

(2) what steps have been taken to ascertain the views of people in southeast London with regard to a station at Woolwich for Crossrail; [15301]

(3) what assessment has been made of whether a station at Woolwich for Crossrail would meet the Government's integrated transport criteria for new rail schemes; [15302]

(4) what steps he took to ensure that the case for a station at Woolwich was properly assessed before the Crossrail Bill was presented to the House; [15303]

(5) what the estimated costs are of building a station at Woolwich after the Crossrail link through to Abbey Wood has opened. [15304]

Derek Twigg: Cross London Rail Links Ltd. (CLRLL), the company set up to develop and promote the Crossrail project, did consider a Crossrail station at Woolwich during the development of the project, but, based on the then current estimates of cost, passenger numbers and benefits, they concluded that it could not be justified. Powers to construct such a station are therefore not being sought in the Bill introduced into Parliament on 22 February 2005.

However, CLRLL are, at the request of the London Borough of Greenwich and other stakeholders, currently undertaking a more detailed study of the costs and benefits of a station at Woolwich, which will be published in due course. This study will assess the case for the station against the Government's integrated transport criteria for new rail schemes and will include a cost benefit analysis.

No estimate has been made of the potential cost of constructing a station at Woolwich once Crossrail is operational. However, this would entail closure of the route from Custom House to Abbey Wood for many months, and therefore the cost would be greater than for construction before operation.

CLRLL consulted widely including two twelve-week rounds of public consultation on the project. During both rounds, public information centres were held at Woolwich and Abbey Wood, to provide information and seek residents' views. These were supported by mail drops to those potentially affected, newsletters, a dedicated website and a 24-hour telephone helpline.

Croydon Tramlink (Offences)

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list offences recorded by the British Transport Police occurring on the Croydon Tramlink

System for each year since the inception of the system, broken down by *(a)* type of offence and *(b)* tram stop. [15541]

Derek Twigg: A table showing the number of offences on the Croydon Tramlink system, recorded by *(a)* offence group and *(b)* tram stop for financial years 2000–01 to 2004–05 and within British Transport Police's jurisdiction, has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Disused Railways

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the disused sections of railway track where agreement has been reached that they should be reopened for passenger traffic. [15691]

Derek Twigg: Network Rail advises that it is committed to re-opening the following sections of line:

Maryhill-Anniesland—[illegible] opened on 29 September;

The north end of the [illegible] London Line—from Dalston Junction to Holywell Viaduct;

Stirling-Alloa;

Airdrie-Bathgate; and

Hamilton-Larkhall.

EU Directives

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) pursuant to the answer of 25 May 2005, *Official Report*, column 127W, on EU discussions, if he will make a statement on the measures to be introduced under the planned directive amending directive 91/440/EEC on the development of the Community's railways; [16168]

(2) pursuant to the answer of 25 May 2005, *Official Report*, column 127W, on EU discussions, if he will make a statement on measures to be introduced under the planned directive on the certification of train crews operating locomotives and trains; [16169]

(3) pursuant to the answer of 25 May 2005, *Official Report*, column 127W, on EU discussions, if he will make a statement on measures to be introduced under the planned directive on international rail passengers' rights and obligations; [16170]

(4) pursuant to the answer of 25 May 2005, *Official Report*, column 127W, on EU discussions, if he will make a statement on measures to be introduced under the planned directive on compensation in cases of non-compliance with contractual quality requirements for rail freight services. [16171]

Derek Twigg: These four proposals form the commission's third rail package and are intended to help revitalise the European Communities' rail industry.

The planned directive amending directive 91/440/EEC on the development of the community's railways would extend the existing liberalisation of the international rail freight market to cover international passenger services, including cabotage—the right to pick up and set down passengers on domestic sections of an international route.

The planned directive on the certification of train crews operating locomotives and trains would reproduce a system of train driver licensing that will facilitate the recognition of driver competences throughout the European Union.

The planned regulation on international rail passengers' rights and obligations would introduce new mandatory provisions on passenger rights, including rights of persons with reduced mobility, and compensation entitlements.

The planned regulation on compensation in cases of non-compliance with contractual quality requirements for rail freight services would impose mandatory provisions on compensation for poor service quality.

These proposals are still under negotiation in the council and European Parliament. Negotiations in the council have so far focussed on the proposal for train driver licensing, on which a general approach on a compromise text was reached in December 2004; and on the passenger rights proposal, on which the UK presidency is aiming to general approach on a compromise text by the end of this year.

The proposal on freight quality contracts has also been discussed and unanimously opposed by member states. Discussion of the proposal on liberalisation of international passenger services will start under the UK presidency.

The European Parliament's Transport and Tourism Committee has proposed a number of amendments to three of the four Commission proposals. It has voted to reject outright the fourth proposal (freight quality contracts). The plenary first reading has not yet taken place.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 25 May 2005, *Official Report*, column 127W, on EU discussions, if he will make a statement on measures to be introduced under the planned directive on the harmonisation of certain social legislation relating to road transport. [16173]

Dr. Ladyman: Two legislative proposals relating to harmonisation of social legislation relating to road transport are currently being negotiated within the EU institutions. The first is a proposal to replace the existing rules on drivers' hours as contained in EU Regulation (EEC No. 3820/85). The second is a proposed directive (known as the "enforcement directive") to replace the current requirements relating to the levels of checks member states must undertake to ensure compliance with the driver's hours rules.

The transport council reached a political agreement on both these proposals on 11 June 2004, and the Common Positions were formally adopted on 9 December 2004. Under the Common Position on driver's hours the main changes proposed for the core provisions on driving and rest times are:

an increase in the minimum uninterrupted daily rest period from 8 to 9 hours (plus changes to the way total daily rest is taken);

a reduction in the maximum driving time per calendar week from 72 hours to 56 hours;

at least one regular weekly rest period of 45 consecutive hours must be taken during any two consecutive weeks, and either another regular weekly rest period or a reduced weekly rest period (at least 24 hours) which can be taken anywhere provided the reduction is compensated for within three weeks;

an uninterrupted 45 minute break after 4½ hours driving or, alternatively, a break of 5 minutes for every ½ hour driving (or part thereof)—subject to a minimum of 15 minutes and a maximum driving time of 4½ hours.

The Council is also seeking through this piece of legislation to rectify significant gaps in the associated Regulation on digital tachographs by setting down requirements for drivers to enter data about non-driving work and for companies to download data and make it available at, or from, their premises. It will also provide a revised date for the introduction of the digital tachographs.

The Common Position on the enforcement directive would require increased numbers of checks both on vehicles by the roadside and at company headquarters.

On 13 April 2005 the European Parliament, at 2nd Reading, requested many amendments to both Common Positions—some relating to the changes mentioned above. Under the co-decision procedure the Council and European Parliament will now seek to reach agreed texts through conciliation. This process is scheduled to be completed in December.

Once the EU legislation is adopted, the Government will prepare Regulations for the implementation of those measures that are not directly applicable.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 25 May 2005, *Official Report*, column 127W, on EU discussions, if he will make a statement on measures to be introduced under the planned directive on market access to port services. [16176]

Dr. Ladyman: The European Commission's proposed directive is currently being scrutinised by the European Parliament. As significant amendments have already been proposed (notably the removal of reference to self handling) it is too early to speculate on measures to be introduced. However, an explanatory note setting out the initial UK Government viewpoint and our detailed assessment of the potential impact of the Commission's initial proposal are now available on the Department for Transport website.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 25 May 2005, *Official Report*, column 127W, on EU discussions, if he will make a statement on measures to be introduced under the planned directive on Marco Polo II. [16179]

Dr. Ladyman: The European Commission's proposed Regulation would establish a second 'Marco Polo' Programme to fund projects that will lead to the transfer of traffic from road to rail or water (sea or inland). The objective of this measure is to reduce road congestion, improve the environmental performance of the freight transport system within the EU and to enhance intermodality.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 25 May 2005, *Official Report*, column 127W, on EU discussions, if he will make a statement on measures to be introduced under the planned directive on satellite radio navigation. [16181]

Dr. Ladyman: The proposal is for a Regulation of the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament on future financing for the deployment and operation of the Galileo (European Global Navigation Satellite System) programme. The Commission's proposal, like others on EU finances, will not be agreed until an overall decision has been reached on the next EU budgetary cycle 2007–13.

European Contractors

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list contractors based in other EU member states that are providing services to his Department. [15452]

Ms Buck: The following table shows contracts awarded/order placed to other EU member states between 1 September 2004 and 31 August 2005.

Contracts awarded/order placed to other EU member states

Contractor	*Nationality*
DfT (Central)	
Central Dredging Association	Netherlands
CompuServe	Ireland
Euro NCAP	Belgium
Holiday Care	Belgium
Microsoft Subs Centre	Ireland
ICTCT	Hungary
Eurocontrol	Belgium
PIANC	Belgium
OECD	France
Jeppesen	Germany
Elsevier Science	Netherlands
Fearnleys A/S	Norway
Swedish National Energy Admin	Sweden
Shippax Information	Sweden
Ertico SC	Belgium
Dekra Automobil GMBH	Germany
Hotel Maison Rouge	France
Hamburg Airport	Germany
European Inst Public Administration	Netherlands
ECAC Secretariat	France
Leids University	Netherlands
Int Assoc of Maritime Economists	Netherlands
European Inst Maritime Transport Law	Belgium
European Disability Forum	Belgium
B and C Conferences	France
Kontec	Germany
Hilton Prague	Czech Republic
Mentz Datenverarbeitung GMBH	Germany
Maureen Silvia Friedman	Italy
Alto Sari	France
IFRI Activities	France
Ecolo	Germany
Traiteur Domus Cuisine	Belgium
De La Cruz Ronnie	France
Deutsche Gesellschaft Fur Oprto	Germany
Club Association	France
Stichting Humaniversity	Netherlands
Highways Agency	
Terrainaging	Holland
Icatel Optical Fibre GmbH	Germany
Bayerische Kabelwerke AG	Germany

Contracts awarded/order placed to other EU member states

Contractor	*Nationality*
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency	
Joh. Enschede	The Netherlands
Infoset	The Netherlands
Navteq	The Netherlands
Addon Mail	France
Driving Standards Agency	
Stralfors plc	Sweden[1]
Maritime and Coastguard Agency	
Lamor Corporation Ab	Finland
Kongsberg Satellite Services	Norway
SAS Larive environnement	France
Det Norkse Veritas	Norway
OPEC	Various
Norcontrol IT Ltd	Norway
Terma A/S	Danish
Kongsberg Satellite Services	Norway
Vehicle and Operator Services Agency	
GE Equipment Services Europe	France
Eurotunnel	France
Neopost	France[1]
Siemens Business Systems Ltd	Germany[1]
VL Test Systems Ltd	Holland[1]
MAHA	Germany[1]
Vehicle Certification Agency	
Branco Lobo—Netrad Consult	Spain
Cemet	Italy
UTAC	France
ISO	Belgium
ETRTO	Switzerland

[1] Order placed with UK subsidiary.

The Department does not always deal directly with the head office of a company and may not have any reason to request or hold this data. This information can therefore be provided only at disproportionate cost. The above table has been compiled using readily available supplier information held by the central Department and its agencies.

Free Bus Travel

Stephen Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will introduce free local bus travel for *(a)* pensioners and *(b)* disabled persons. [16728]

Ms Buck: The statutory entitlement to free off-peak local bus travel in England for people 60 and over and disabled people will come into effect on 1 April 2006.

General Lighthouse Fund

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much was contributed by the General Lighthouse Fund to navigational aids in the territorial waters of the Republic of Ireland in 2004–05; and what the estimated contributions are for the next three years. [15968]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is set out as follows.

	GLF contribution relating to the Republic of Ireland (Sterling £ million)
2004–05	6.88
2005–06[1]	9.44
2006–07[1]	8.19

[1] Estimated

The figures for 2005–06 and 2006–07 include costs in relation to the new Head Office building at Dun Laoghaire for the Commissioners of Irish Lights; and are net of the estimated proceeds from the sale of the existing building in Dublin and the additional contribution from the Irish Government. The net cost of the project to the General Lighthouse Fund is expected to be £4.7 million with estimated running cost savings of £1.4 million per annum.

No detailed planning exists for 2007–08.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received regarding the cessation of payments from the UK General Lighthouse Fund for the provision of navigational aids in Irish territorial waters. [16052]

Dr. Ladyman: We have received representations from a number of interested parties including the Lights Advisory Committee, representing the maritime industry, the Independent Light Dues Forum, 12 from Members of the UK Parliament and two from Members of the European Parliament.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress his Department has made with negotiations with the Irish Government on the cessation of payments from the UK General Lighthouse Fund for the provision of navigational aids in Irish territorial waters. [16114]

Dr. Ladyman: We have begun to work with the Irish Government's Department of Communication, Marine and Natural Resources to review the current funding arrangements for the Commissioners of Irish Lights, focusing initially on agreeing common ground and exploring possible solutions.

We are keen to see progress in bringing these funding arrangements up to date as part of our wider work with all three General Lighthouse Authorities to make further gains in the cost-effective delivery of aids to navigation.

Graduated Driver Licensing Scheme

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the Graduated Driver Licensing scheme. [16324]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has commissioned research on this topic and TRL report number 529: "Graduated driver licensing—a review of some current systems" was published in 2002 (available on-line at www.trl.co.uk/1024/mainpage.asp?page=141).

As part of our Road Safety Strategy, we consulted in 2002 on a number of options for improving the safety of new drivers, including changes to the licensing system. Although some support was expressed for the introduction of a full graduated licensing system, the Secretary of State concluded that the skills needed to drive unaccompanied should be demonstrated at the time of the practical test, and that the introduction of new licensing arrangements such as a requirement to take a second practical test or the imposition of restrictions on newly qualified drivers, was not justified. The consultation document and decision letter are

available on-line from the Department's website at www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_control/documents/contentservertemplate/dft_index.hcst?n=10204&l=2.

Heathrow Airport

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will review the security arrangements in place at Heathrow airport for which his Department is responsible in the light of the recent London bombings, with particular reference to the training provided to British Airports Authority staff; [15155]

(2) if he will review the security arrangements in place at Heathrow airport which are the responsibility of his Department in the light of the recent London bombings, with particular reference to the training provided to the relevant staff. [15154]

Ms Buck: Training of staff at all UK airports is covered by regulations issued by this Department under the Aviation Security Act 1982. These regulations impose mandatory training on new employees, and regular refresher training for existing staff, undertaking a security duty. Regulations also impose mandatory training requirements on aircrew, and staff working for in-flight catering companies and cargo companies. Training, which can only be delivered by trainers accredited by this Department, is inspected by DfT inspectors.

The UK aviation security training programme is kept under regular review, both through a sub-committee of the National Aviation Security Committee, at which key industry stakeholders are represented, and regular liaison between officials and the industry, trade unions, police and security service.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the last on-the-ground measurements of noise from aircrafts using London Heathrow airport were taken. [15529]

Ms Buck: Departure noise is continually monitored by BAA at 10 fixed sites under the departure tracks at Heathrow. These are put in place to gauge whether departing aircraft comply with the noise limits specified in the noise abatement notice for Heathrow under Section 78(1) of the Civil Aviation Act 1982. Compliance is reviewed regularly through BAA's Noise and Track Keeping Working Group, and data is published annually in BAA's Flight Evaluation Report.

Data from the fixed monitors and additional mobile noise monitors is used to validate a noise exposure model for the 16-hour day time summer period. The Civil Aviation Authority, on behalf of the Department, uses the model to produce annual noise contours at Heathrow airport. The 2004 noise contours have recently been published on the Department's website.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many of the London Heathrow airport standard instrument departure and arrival routes pass over the Twickenham constituency. [15530]

Ms Buck: The Twickenham constituency lies under four standard instrument departure routes when aircraft take off to the east. At Heathrow, given the direction of the prevailing wind, this is only about 20–30 per cent. of the time during a typical year, although prolonged periods of such operations can occur at any time. Twickenham is not directly overflown by arriving aircraft approaching Heathrow.

Helicopters

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how many helicopter movements there were in the air space above the London borough of Brent in each year since 1997; [15438]

(2) how many helicopter flights have taken place in the Dollis Hill area in each year since 1997. [15562]

Ms Buck: This information is not held by my Department. I have asked the chief executive of National Air Traffic Services Ltd to write to the hon. Member.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the *(a)* environmental and *(b)* price impacts on residential properties of low flying helicopters in the Dollis Hill area of London; and if he will make a statement. [15826]

Ms Buck: None.

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the rules governing helicopter flights above residential areas in South-West London; and what measures are in place to *(a)* monitor and *(b)* enforce the rules. [15894]

Ms Buck: The Rules of the Air Regulations and the Air Navigation (Restriction of Flying) (Specified Area) Regulations govern flight by helicopters over London. For single engine helicopters this includes the use of specified routes and prohibition from the central area of London.

All helicopter flights in the controlled airspace over London are subject to an air traffic control clearance and compliance with their instructions is monitored by air traffic controllers. Any reported breach of these clearances or regulations are investigated by the Civil Aviation Authority, who are responsible for the enforcement of aviation legislation within the UK.

Highways Agency

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the national co-ordination within the Highways Agency; who is responsible for a national technological strategy for the agency; what management structures are in place to ensure that regional technological developments are compatible; and if he will make a statement. [15045]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency takes a co-ordinated approach to applying technology schemes across the country and targets them where they can deliver the maximum benefit.

The agency's technology strategy steering group is responsible for developing a national traffic technology strategy. This group comprises representatives from all areas of the agency that have a direct input to programme delivery and technology standards development and it, in turn, reports to a sub-group of the Highways Agency board called the strategy and planning group.

Technology development is undertaken centrally and applied nationally once the technology has been proven and a national standard has been produced. This ensures regional compatibility.

Intelligent Speed Adaptation System

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the Intelligent Speed Adaptation system. [16319]

Dr. Ladyman: A research project into External Vehicle Speed Control (the technology now more commonly known as Intelligent Speed Adaptation or ISA) was carried out on behalf of the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions between 1997 and 2000. The results are available on the Department for Transport website and copies of the executive summary have been placed in the Library.

A further project into Intelligent Speed Adaptation began in 2001 and is expected to end in December 2006. A draft interim report for the first completed phase has been produced and submitted to the Department. However, as it is important to avoid influencing the behaviour of subsequent groups of drivers, I do not intend to publish this or subsequent interim reports. They will be made available when the project has been completed and the final report submitted.

In addition the Department has been taking part in "SpeedAlert"—a European project looking at work in this field. The consortium's final report is being prepared and when it is complete copies will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Light Dues

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much revenue from light dues has been collected from ships calling at ports in *(a)* Scotland, *(b)* the Isle of Man, *(c)* England and Wales, *(d)* Northern Ireland and *(e)* the Republic of Ireland, in each of the last 10 financial years. [16085]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is set out as follows for the years 1997–98 to 2004–05. We do not have the data broken down in this way prior to 1997.

£

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*
Scotland	6,628,362	8,034,125	8,929,664	9,110,458
Isle of Man	37,730	44,425	20,636	19,013
England and Wales	51,540,876	54,942,312	55,756,006	57,923,612
Northern Ireland	706,508	617,012	662,504	599,415
Republic of Ireland (ROI)	2,816,420	3,131,481	3,464,780	3,416,675
Total	61,729,896	66,769,355	68,833,590	71,069,173

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Scotland	8,536,211	7,270,784	6,495,877	6,475,266
Isle of Man	19,401	26,075	24,261	22,969
England and Wales	62,489,783	60,343,914	63,510,099	60,825,662
Northern Ireland	662,196	637,722	600,136	586,000
Republic of Ireland (ROI)	3,077,674	3,363,730	3,482,544	3,053,012
Total	74,785,265	71,642,225	74,112,917	70,962,911

The figures above are for General Light Dues and do not include income from UK fishing vessels and tugs.

The figures do not include any Light Dues refunds that were made.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received from the European Commission regarding compatibility of the light dues tax with European law. [16116]

Dr. Ladyman: None.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received from the European Commission regarding the light dues tax. [16117]

Dr. Ladyman: Under the Merchant Shipping Act 1995, the UK Government has a statutory responsibility to fund the Commissioners of Irish Lights, the General Lighthouse Authority (GLA) that provides aids to navigation in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland. The GLAs are funded from the collection of light dues, a system of user charges levied on commercial shipping calling at UK and Republic of Ireland ports. These dues are paid into the General Lighthouse Fund for which the Secretary of State has responsibility. The UK Government do not contribute to the fund.

We have received representations on light dues from two members of the European Parliament. We have not received any communication from the European Commission.

London Gateway Port Development

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the impact of the London Gateway port development, with particular reference to channel dredging and traffic, on possible future uses of the Canvey Island liquid natural gas importation facility; and if he will make a statement. [15616]

Dr. Ladyman: All relevant matters would be taken into account in consideration of any application that might be made for a liquefied natural gas importation facility at Canvey Island.

M3

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to resurface the area of the M3 between junctions 12 and 13 with a noise-reducing material. [16502]

Dr. Ladyman: This section of the M3 was constructed in 1991 as part of the junction 12 to 14 Pitmore to Chilworth scheme. Noise mitigation measures such as acoustic barriers and noise bunds were included as part of the construction.

There are no plans for major resurfacing of the section of the M3 motorway between junctions 12 and 13. Resurfacing is carried out for operational reasons to maintain the safety of the carriageway. This section of the M3 is currently in a satisfactory condition and will not require major resurfacing in the foreseeable future.

M60

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made in ascertaining the reasons for flooding on the M60 between Denton and Hollinwood, Oldham. [15098]

Dr. Ladyman: Investigations have indicated that the surface water problems that occur at specific areas on the predominately four-lane section of M60 between Junction 19 at Middleton and Junction 24 at Denton result from a combination of wide carriageways and the road alignment and crossfall, which cause rainwater to have a long and slow pathway off the carriageway to the drains.

The design of carriageway modifications to improve the surface water drainage between Junction 24 at Denton and the River Medlock has been completed. Remedial works on this section are expected to start during the autumn and continue in 2006. Further assessment is being carried out on the section between the Medlock River and Junction 19 at Middleton, following which any necessary remedial works will be undertaken.

Media Relations

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much the Department has spent on external media relations in each month of the last year. [14685]

Ms Buck: The Department has press officers who handle much of its media relations with the support of the Government News Network in the regions. In addition, the Department spent the following amount in each month of 2004–05 on consultancy fees for external media relations primarily to support our marketing activities for example the THINK! road safety campaign.

£

	DfT (central)	*DfT (agencies)*
2004		
April	513	33,000
May	29,478	30,625
June	68,493	40,906
July	42,221	30,650
August	0	30,900
September	32,770	28,765
October	32,640	28,083
November	59,901	29,645
December	30,549	27,645
2005		
January	22,151	28,795
February	29,524	30,465
March	89,970	33,848

Motorways

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to start trials on the M42 motorway of using the hard shoulder for regular traffic; over what period such trials are to be carried out; when he expects to reach conclusions on the wider use of hard shoulders; and if he will make a statement. [15042]

Dr. Ladyman: Introduction of controlled use of hard shoulder running as part of the Active Traffic Management (ATM) Pilot Project on the M42 will begin by March 2007 in line with the published Highways Agency Business Plan target.

Comprehensive monitoring and evaluation is being undertaken to evaluate the effects of the range of measures introduced as part of ATM and especially of hard shoulder running. Analysis of the data and reporting will take time after the operation commences and in a number of cases robust answers will only be available after a number of months or years.

Specifically, in order to measure the traffic impact of hard shoulder running a period of 12 months of operation is expected. Due to the relatively low number of accidents that occur on motorways it is anticipated that three years of 'accident data' will be needed before overall conclusions can be reached on the impact of hard shoulder running on safety. Initial conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the various measures implemented on the M42 are therefore expected in 2008.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many safety refuges are in place on motorways in England and Wales; how many are in the course of construction; how many more are planned; and in which locations. [15044]

Dr. Ladyman: In respect to the motorway network within England, only the M42 junction 3a to junction 7 currently has formal safety refuges in place. A total of 41 Emergency Refuge Areas were installed as part of the Active Traffic Management (ATM) pilot scheme. No further safety refuges are planned, pending the results of the pilot project.

Multi-Modal Studies

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list *(a)* each of the multi-modal studies that have been published since May 1997 and *(b)* such studies which are still in progress; and what plans the Government has to produce further studies. [15217]

Ms Buck: A programme of Multi-Modal Studies was announced in March 1999. The table sets out the position on each of the studies. In the case of the final study programme we agreed in 2003 to a scoping study rather than a full Multi-Modal Study for the A34 North of Southampton to review the broad scale of problems and key issues on the A34. This reported in 2004 and our response was given to the South East Regional Assembly earlier this year.

We have no plans for any further Multi-Modal Studies.

Multi-Modal Studies

Multi-Modal Study	*Final report published*	*Date Government announced response to study*
Access to Hastings (A21 and A259)	December 2000	12 July 2001
Cambridge to Huntingdon (A14)	August 2001	13 December 2001
South East Manchester (Stockport, Manchester Airport Link West, Poynton)	September 2001	21 March 2002
West Midlands Area (M5/M6 and M42 between M40 and M6)	October 2001	9 July 2003
West Midlands to North West (M6)	May 2002	10 December 2002
London to South West and South Wales (A303, M4)	May 2002	10 December 2002
A1 (North of Newcastle)	Reported May 2002	10 December 2002
North/South Movements in the East Midlands (M1 Junctions 21 to 30)	May 2002	10 December 2002
Hull (East/West) Corridor (A63 and A1033 to Port of Hull)	July 2002	9 July 2003
A453 (M1 to Nottingham)	August 2002	10 December 2002
South Coast (Southampton to Folkestone Coastal Corridor)—(M27, A27 and A259)	September 2002	9 July 2003
South and West Yorkshire Motorway Box (M1 J30 to A1 West Yorks/M18/M62 and A1(M)	September 2002	9 July 2003
Tyneside Area (A1/A19)	November 2002	9 July 2003
ORBIT—Transport Solutions Around London (M25)	November 2002	9 July 2003
London to Ipswich (A12)	December 2002	9 July 2003
Thames Valley (London to Reading—M4)	January 2003	9 July 2003
M60 Junction 12–18 (West to North Manchester)	January 2003	9 July 2003
London to South Midlands (A1 , M1 , M11 , A5 and A421)	February 2003	9 July 2003
Norwich to Peterborough (A47)	March 2003	9 July 2003
West Midlands to East Midlands (A38, A42/M42 and M69)	August 2003	[1]
A52 Corridor—(section of the A52 corridor between its junction with the A453 at Clifton Bridge, west of Nottingham, and its junction with the A46 at Bingham, east of Nottingham.)	March 2004	[1]
A34 North of Southampton	April 2004	February 2005

[1] We will consider the recommendations from the West Midlands to East Midlands and A52 Corridor Studies in the light of regional advice on the timing and priority of schemes to be provided under the recently announced Regional Funding Allocations process.

National Street Gazetteer

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what *(a)* duties and *(b)* powers local highway authorities possess in relation to the National Street Gazetteer; what information he collects on the extent to which each meets its responsibilities; what communications he has had with or in relation to the Isle of Wight council's performance in this regard; and what steps he has taken to satisfy himself that all unadopted roads and parts thereof on the island are recorded as such in the Gazetteer. [16545]

Ms Buck: The National Street Gazetteer is maintained by a concessionaire appointed under the auspices of the Local Government Association.

Street Authorities are required, under section 53 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, and the Street Works (Registers, Notices, Directions and Designations) Regulations 1992, to maintain a register showing information about works on the streets within their areas.

This duty ensures that street authorities must keep local street Gazetteers, so that works are identified on the relevant street. The concessionaire relies on the local Gazetteers in compiling the National Street Gazetteer. Central Government has no role in assuring the content of either the national or local street Gazetteers.

Department for Transport officials have been in communication with the Isle of Wight council about the quality of their local street Gazetteer following representations from a resident on the island.

Pensioners (Free Travel)

Paul Rowen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what the total additional cost of introducing free travel for pensioners will be in 2006–07; [15287]

(2) what the cost to passenger transport areas will be for the provision of free travel for pensioners; and if he will make extra resources available to cover this. [15288]

Ms Buck: The Government will provide an extra £350 million in 2006–07 which will be sufficient to fund the cost to the concessionary travel authorities, including the passenger transport executives.

Private Finance Initiative

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 14 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 250–51W, on the private initiative, what total value of assets and liabilities for each of the listed private finance initiatives and public private partnerships is recorded on the Government balance sheet; what proportion of assets and liabilities is listed; what the accounting treatment is for assets and liabilities; and whether it is compatible with *(a)* generally-accepted accounting practices and *(b)* international financial reporting standards. [15956]

Ms Buck: For the financial year ending 31 March 2005, the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency's annual accounts showed a capital commitment in relation to the Estates PFI Agreement with Land Securities Trillium of £3.5 million.

The Vehicle and Operator Standards Agency's MOT computerisation PFI project is off balance sheet.

For the Highways Agency, the net book value of on-balance sheet PFI tangible fixed assets as at 31 March 2005 was £1,486,286,000. This represents assets held under all on-balance sheet schemes for the Agency. It includes PFI residual interests. PFI assets are valued at the public sector comparator, indexed to December

2004. The value of the liabilities related to on-balance sheet PFI contracts was £866,621,000 as at 31 March 2005. £23,889,000 was payable within one year and the balance thereafter. Figures for individual schemes are not separately identified in the Agency's accounts.

It is not possible to quantify the proportion of assets and liabilities held on balance sheet, as the value of assets and liabilities off balance sheet for an agency and on balance sheet for the operator is recognised on the balance sheets of the operators. Their accounting policies relating to fixed assets may differ from our own and the value of the liabilities would not include any profit margin. Therefore, figures will not necessarily be comparable.

For all the Department's Agencies, the accounting policy for PFI contracts is consistent with UK GAAP as interpreted by Treasury guidance. The public sector complies with UK GAAP. The timetable for converging UK GAAP with International Standards is published on the Accounting Standards Board website and the Financial Reporting Advisory Board has plans that closely align with this.

Railways

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) when he expects to make an announcement on the award of the new Integrated Kent Franchise; [15271]

(2) when the Integrated Kent Franchise will begin; and if he will make a statement. [15272]

Derek Twigg: It is expected that contracts will be signed with the successful bidder before the end of 2005. An announcement will be made at this point.

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the performance of South East trains *(a)* since November 2003 and *(b)* over an equivalent period under the previous franchise company; and if he will make a statement. [15273]

Derek Twigg: At the end of August 2005, the PPM Moving Annual Average (MAA) for South Eastern Trains (SET) was 85.3 per cent. The PPM MAA in the last period in which Connex South Eastern operated services was 79.4 per cent. This shows an improvement since SET took over the franchise of 5.9 percentage points. This compares to an equivalent improvement of 7.1 percentage points for train services in the South East sector as a whole, where PPM MAA at the end of August stands at 86.4 per cent.

SET has performed well in improving performance by working closely with Network Rail in order to reduce overall delays on trains and at stations.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the environmental effects of increasing the carriage of freight on rail. [15023]

Derek Twigg: The Government's key aims for the freight industry are to facilitate the continuing development of a competitive and efficient freight sector while reducing the impact that moving freight has on congestion and the environment. Where the Government receive applications for grant to support the transfer of specific freight movements from road to rail we are able to assess the environmental benefits using a measure of Sensitive Lorry Miles (SLMs) which takes into account the environmental and social benefits of removing lorry journeys from the road. However, SLMs are route specific and cannot be used to make a general assessment of the benefits of transferring freight from road to rail.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent by the rail industry on improving rail safety in each year since 1997. [15688]

Derek Twigg: The Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) annual report on health and safety performance on Britain's railways shows that, overall, railway safety has progressed steadily over recent years. Copies of these reports are available in the House library.

Spending on safety and risk controls is not identified separately by the rail industry or the Department within budget lines as it is an integral part of all investment. For example, new infrastructure and replacement rolling stock will be safer than that which it replaced.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many passengers *(a)* died and *(b)* were seriously injured while travelling by rail in each year from 1976. [15689]

Derek Twigg: Statistics from the Health and Safety Executive's HM Railway Inspectorate are shown in the following table.

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR 95) introduced in 1 April 1996 does not distinguish between a serious injury and a minor injury to members of the public. Consequently, for injury data from 1996 onwards, the reporting trigger is that passengers are taken away from the accident site immediately to hospital, which includes minor or possible injuries as well as serious ones. As a result, figures for "seriously injured" are not available from 1996–97.

	Passengers killed	*Passengers seriously injured*
1976	30	142
1977	30	129
1978	47	130
1979	52	157
1980	26	166
1981	39	107
1982	20	93
1983	29	86
1984	39	115
1985	33	124
1986	32	169
1987	68	177
1988	69	309
1989	33	268
1990	37	224
1991–92[1]	39	192
1992–93	18	238
1993–94	17	205
1994–95	17	204
1995–96	11	214
1996–97	17	[2]—
1997–98	26	[2]—
1998–99	20	[2]—
1999–2000	47	[2]—

	Passengers killed	Passengers seriously injured
2000–01	21	[2]
2001–02	13	[2]
2002–03	23	[2]
2003–04	12	[2]
2004[3]	10	[2]

[1] Covers the 15-month period 1 January 1991 to 31 March 1991.
[2] Not available due to change in reporting criteria—RIDDOR 95
[3] Covers a nine-month period 1 April 2004 to 31 December 2004.

Martin Salter: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport who is responsible for medium-scale rail schemes since the winding-up of the Strategic Rail Authority. [15733]

Derek Twigg: Following the reforms set out in the 'Future of Rail' white paper, the previous responsibilities of the Strategic Rail Authority for medium scale rail investment schemes have generally been transferred to Network Rail. The Department for Transport retains a role for some schemes where it has a significant interest, for example where it provides funding for the scheme or if there are major impacts on franchised rail services.

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will place in the Library a copy of correspondence since 1 January between his Department and Network Rail with regard to railway embankment stabilisation works between Winterbourne Down and Coalpit Heath in South Gloucestershire; and if he will make a statement. [13697]

Derek Twigg: I have placed the correspondence in the Library.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* incidents of and *(b)* prosecutions for (i) vandalism and (ii) trespass on railway lines in London by (A) adults and (B) juveniles there were in each of the last five years. [15577]

Derek Twigg: The number of recorded criminal damage and trespass offences committed over the last five years within the Metropolitan and City of London policing areas within British Transport Police's (BTP) jurisdiction is shown as follows:

	Criminal damage	Trespass
2000–01	1,833	217
2001–02	1,901	849
2002–03	2,246	1,439
2003–04	3,411	1,754
2004–05	3,157	1,620

Due to the way BTP records prosecution data, it is not possible to provide prosecution statistics for London only. Therefore, the number of offences prosecuted for criminal damage and trespass based on date of offence are shown separately for the three London BTP areas. The BTP area, London North, covers North London, Northern Home Counties and East Anglia. The BTP area, London South, covers South London and Southern Home Counties. The BTP area, London Underground, covers the entire London Underground network as well as Docklands Light Railway.

The information is as follows:

	Criminal damage		Trespass	
	Adults	Juveniles	Adults	Juveniles
London North				
2000–01	86	46	31	13
2001–02	75	33	31	32
2002–03	94	28	41	16
2003–04	93	21	33	26
2004–05	62	51	76	32
London South				
2000–01	100	74	23	21
2001–02	115	43	28	24
2002–03	101	55	42	23
2003–04	89	78	41	38
2004–05	88	59	50	29
London Underground				
2000–01	83	35	11	10
2001–02	87	49	11	6
2002–03	118	36	14	4
2003–04	109	36	23	3
2004–05	71	92	17	13

Note:
In reading the data supplied in the table, the following factors should be considered:
(i) The data supplied shows the number of recorded offences and prosecutions for trespass and criminal damage. The category criminal damage includes offences of criminal damage (including racially aggravated), arson, graffiti and vandalism rolling stock offences.
(ii) The rise in railway trespass offences is due to an improved internal audit process which has led to a steady improvement in the recording practice of these types of offences.

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether requirements to tackle overcrowding are included in the Integrated Kent Franchise. [15270]

Derek Twigg: The franchise agreement contains an obligation to manage the available resources so as to minimise overcrowding, particularly on peak services.

Road Accidents

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has held with the oil and petroleum industries on the effects of low-level exposure to petrol fumes on the incidence of road accidents. [15408]

Dr. Ladyman: No discussions have been held.

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the effects of exposure to petrol fumes on the incidence of road accidents; and if he will make a statement. [15410]

Dr. Ladyman: No assessments have been made by the Department for Transport.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people *(a)* died and *(b)* were seriously injured in road accidents in each year from 1976. [15690]

Dr. Ladyman: The requested information is in the table.

Killed or seriously injured casualties: 1976–2004

	Killed	Seriously injured	Killed or seriously injured
1976	6,570	79,531	86,101
1977	6,614	81,681	88,295
1978	6,831	82,518	89,349
1979	6,352	80,544	86,896
1980	5,953	78,906	84,859
1981	5,846	78,259	84,105
1982	5,937	79,745	85,682
1983	5,445	70,623	76,068
1984	5,599	73,059	78,658
1985	5,165	70,980	76,145
1986	5,385	68,757	74,142
1987	5,125	64,293	69,418
1988	5,052	63,491	68,543
1989	5,373	63,158	68,531
1990	5,217	60,441	65,658
1991	4,568	51,618	56,186
1992	4,229	49,256	53,485
1993	3,814	45,020	48,834
1994	3,650	46,540	50,190
1995	3,621	45,533	49,154
1996	3,598	44,499	48,097
1997	3,599	42,984	46,583
1998	3,421	40,834	44,255
1999	3,423	39,122	42,545
2000	3,409	38,155	41,564
2001	3,450	37,110	40,560
2002	3,431	35,976	39,407
2003	3,508	33,707	37,215
2004	3,221	31,130	34,351

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the number of road fatalities in Forest of Dean constituency in each of the last five years; what the average number for England was in each year; and if he will make a statement. [15759]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of road accident fatalities in the Forest of Dean constituency and the average number of road accident fatalities per English constituency; for the last five years are in the table.

	Forest of Dean	England[1]
2000	10	6
2001	11	6
2002	10	6
2003	9	6
2004	11	5

[1] Includes fatalities for which the constituency in which the accident occurred was not known.

The comparison between the number of fatalities in any given constituency and the average number across all constituencies takes no account of the differences in area, population, road type and traffic between each constituency.

Road Safety

Mark Tami: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what advice his Department provides for local authorities regarding the siting of *(a)* speed bumps and *(b)* chicanes. [16603]

Dr. Ladyman: Powers permitting the construction of road humps and traffic calming works are conferred by the Highways Act 1980, sections 90A to 90I. The Highways (Road Humps) Regulations 1999 further restrict the location of road humps. Advice on the design and implementation of both road humps and chicanes is given in the Department's traffic advisory leaflets (TALs). I have placed copies of TAL 2/05 "Traffic Calming Bibliography", which lists these, in the Libraries of the House.

Roads (London)

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will allocate sufficient funding to the Mayor of London for a scheme for improvements to the north circular at Henley's corner, Brent street and Bounds Green. [16870]

Dr. Ladyman: The A406 north circular road is the responsibility of Transport for London (TfL) and the Mayor, and it is for the Mayor to determine which transport projects he takes forward.

Safety Cameras

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research he has collated in relation to the change in the number of serious accidents at speed camera sites. [15896]

Dr. Ladyman: The effectiveness of the national safety camera programme has been reviewed independently and the reports are available in the Library and on the Department's website. The review of the first three years operation of the programme, published on 15 June 2004, concluded that the number of people killed or seriously injured at camera sites had reduced by 40 per cent. A fourth year report, reflecting the rollout of the programme to thirty five safety camera partnerships, is being prepared.

School Crossing Attendants

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many school crossing attendants there were in each London borough in each of the last five years. [15830]

Dr. Ladyman: The figures requested are not kept centrally but individually by each borough.

Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on UK participation in the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention of the International Labour Organisation; what biometrics are involved; which UK ports will hold biometric checking devices; and what obligations there are on seamen in UK waters to carry identity cards. [16056]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend, the Minister of State for the Home Office on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2565W.

South Hampshire Light Rapid Transport System

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) when he expects to make a decision on the South Hampshire Light Rapid Transport System; [16500]

(2) when he expects to announce a decision on the South Hampshire Light Rapid Transport System; and if he will make a statement on the time taken to reach a decision. [16832]

Derek Twigg: The Secretary of State made clear the position on the South Hampshire Light Rapid Transport System in his oral statement on 20 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 159. Since then the scheme's promoters have developed revised proposals which we will decide upon in due course.

Street Works

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what benchmark he has established for the current cost of street works to measure changes that will arise from the introduction of permits; how this benchmark was set; what targets he has set for utility companies and highway authorities to improve; and what level of improvements he expects. [16646]

Ms Buck: We are developing proposals under the Traffic Management Act 2004 intended to reduce the impact of street works on congestion. This includes the new concept of permits.

Consultation earlier this year on these measures revealed widely ranging views on permit fees, and other substantive comments. We are therefore to reconvene a working group on permits, comprising representatives of utility companies and street authorities, to review the fees for permits and the cost to utilities, and other related issues. This will also provide the opportunity to look at how utilities expect to improve their performance. We intend to develop key performance indicators to measure local highway authority performance for their own works, to allow comparison with utility performance.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 23 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 934, on roadworks, if he will make a statement on the method by which Halcrow concluded that the cost of congestion caused by utility street works was £4.3 billion per year. [16651]

Ms Buck: Details of the methodology are contained in the Halcrow report to Department for Transport, volume 3—"Estimation of the Cost of Delay from Utilities' Street Works", dated September 2004. Copies of this document have been placed in the House Library.

Thameslink

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what studies his Department has undertaken on the removal of Thames Link spoil by barge. [16093]

Derek Twigg: The 2004 Environmental Statement for the Thameslink 2000 project did consider the potential for the use of river barges for the construction of the project. The document identified that river barges could possibly be used to assist in the construction of Blackfriars station, for example, the transportation of large items of equipment and the removal of material.

Further consideration of the extent to which river transport can be used will be given once contractors are appointed for the implementation of the project and detailed construction strategies are agreed.

Tonnage Tax

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 12 September 2005 , *Official Report*, column 2399W, on the tonnage tax, (1) for what reasons no prosecutions have resulted for the year 2004–05; and if he will make a statement; [16498]

(2) what his policy is with regards to prosecuting companies who have failed to make returns on tonnage tax in the specified time; and if he will make a statement. [16499]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department does not routinely prosecute companies which are late in making end of period adjustment returns. We prefer instead to remind them that they should comply with their obligations in this regard, and that there may be penalties (including prosecution) if they fail to do so. We find that this is an efficacious approach—there is now only one complete return outstanding from periods 1 and 2 of 2004–05, for which we are vigorously chasing the company concerned.

Prosecution is a matter of last resort. We realise that the timely provision of returns is an important matter, but criminal prosecution is always a serious step to take.

Traffic Management Act

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what assessment he has made of the impact of the Traffic Management Act 2004 on the Government objectives of *(a)* improvement to access to broadband, *(b)* reducing water leakage and conserving water supplies, *(c)* replacing major energy and water infrastructure and *(d)* urban regeneration; [16635]

(2) what his latest estimate is of the costs that will be borne by *(a)* electricity, *(b)* gas, *(c)* water and *(d)* telecommunications companies arising from the provisions of the Traffic Management Act 2004. [16647]

Ms Buck: We will introduce regulations under the Traffic Management Act 2004 intended to reduce the impact of street works on congestion. The measures will not prevent investment or renewal by utility companies but aim to ensure that work is carried out in a way that minimises the impact on road users. Where street authorities operate permit schemes fees will be payable by utilities for permits. These will be payable to Street Authorities to reflect the resource required for them to consider works by utility companies under the more proactive permit arrangements which are intended to improve control and co-ordination of street works by authorities.

The consultation on these measures revealed widely ranging views on permit fees, and other aspects of this new concept. we are therefore to reconvene a working group on permits, comprising representatives of utility companies and Street Authorities, which advised on the permit proposals, to look at the proposed fees for permits.

Transport

Paul Rowen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what progress he has made in considering the Greater Manchester Integrated Transport Strategy submitted to his Department on 4th April; [15283]

(2) what progress has been made in his consideration of the Manchester Metrolink Phase 2. [15284]

Derek Twigg: The Integrated Transport Strategy for Greater Manchester incorporates proposals for Metrolink Phase III into a wider package of measures. The Department has had a number of discussions with Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive concerning their strategy and these are continuing.

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the relationship is between the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee and the Rail Passengers Council North West. [15055]

Derek Twigg: The Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) are our statutory advisers on the transport and mobility needs of disabled people. The committee had no links with the Rail Passengers Council North West but the Rail Passengers Council (like its predecessor) has been invited to participate in the DPTAC Rail Working Group.

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what criteria were used to select the members of the Rail Passengers Council GB; and what the process was for their selection. [15056]

Derek Twigg: The process by which the new Rail Passengers Council members were appointed by the Secretary of State was regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA) and in line with the code of practice for ministerial appointments to public bodies, which is issued by OCPA. The process was validated by an independent assessor.

The criteria against which applications for membership of the Rail Passengers Council were assessed were published in the application pack. The essential criteria were:

Proven leadership and strategic thinking skills;

Frequent user of National Rail services;

Demonstrate understanding of passenger issues;

Ability to build credible, constructive relationships with all sections of the rail industry and its stakeholders;

Ability to build credible, constructive relationships with the chairman, other members and staff of the Rail Passengers Council;

Knowledge of a specialist field such as:

- Consumer affairs;
- Customer facing business;
- Rail industry;
- Integrated transport;
- Business use of rail;
- Regulatory affairs;
- Disability and access issues;
- Social exclusion and transport;
- Consumer/community empowerment;
- Campaigning;
- Media and/or public relations;
- Local government;
- Regional government.

Desire to create a leading consumer organisation.

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department has taken to ensure that *(a)* issues affecting disabled passengers and *(b)* regional issues are dealt with effectively by the Rail Passengers Council GB. [15057]

Derek Twigg: The Rail Passenger Council (RPC) will establish its own work programme, which will include setting up a working group which will ensure that the new RPC is accessible to, and inclusive of, the needs of disabled passengers and other groups of vulnerable consumers.

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department took to ensure an appropriate regional spread in the membership of the Rail Passengers Council GB. [15058]

Derek Twigg: The members of the Rail Passengers Council (RPC) appointed by the Secretary of State were not appointed to represent particular geographical areas. They were appointed because they best demonstrated the published criteria for membership of the new RPC. As members of a single, national body, covering all parts of Great Britain, members of the RPC are expected to represent passengers on this basis, working in partnership with the RPC staff.

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport where each member of the Rail Passenger Council GB *(a)* lives and *(b)* works. [15059]

Derek Twigg: The 14 appointed members of the new Rail Passengers Council (RPC) live in Monmouthshire, Fife, Cambridgeshire (three), Shropshire, Norfolk, East Yorkshire, Worcestershire, Hertfordshire, London (two), Kent and East Lothian. The appointment by the National Assembly for Wales is still to be made.

The Department does not hold information on the work locations of the members of the RPC.

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions his Department has had with *(a)* the regional passenger councils, *(b)* other groups and organisations representing passengers and *(c)* groups and organisations representing disabled passengers about the creation of Rail Passengers Council GB. [15060]

Derek Twigg: As set out in the Future of Rail White Paper, Ministers supported proposals for reform from the then RPC chair, Stewart Francis. A wide range of stakeholders were consulted in developing these proposals further. These stakeholders included the regional Rail Passenger Committees (some of whom had links to regional Passenger Transport User Forums), other groups and organisations representing passengers (for example, Rail User Groups), the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) and the Disability Rights Commission.

Paul Rowen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what criteria will be used for the approval of schemes for the Transport Innovation Scheme. [15285]

Derek Twigg: Information on the objectives and operation of the Transport Innovation fund was published on 5 July 2005 in the paper "The Transport Innovation Fund". This paper outlined the characteristics that successful schemes would meet. More detailed guidance on the operation of the fund, including information on the application and decision making process, will be published by the end of 2005.

US Prisoners

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the dates when UK *(a)* territory and *(b)* airspace has been used for the transport of persons held as prisoners by US civilian or military authorities in the past 12 months. [15580]

Ms Buck: International and national aviation regulations do not require the provision of passenger information when transiting UK territory or airspace. The UK Government have not received any requests, nor granted any permissions, for the use of UK territory or airspace for the purpose raised in the hon. Member's question.

Vehicle Ownership

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the number of cars owned in *(a)* Brent East, *(b)* each London borough, *(c)* London and *(d)* England in each year since 1997; and what percentage of the total he estimates were four-wheel drive in each year. [16234]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is detailed in the table:

	1997	1998	1999	2000
Brent East	22,000	23,000	23,000	24,000
City of London	16,000	14,000	11,000	9,000
Barking and Dagenham	45,000	46,000	47,000	48,000
Barnet	115,000	117,000	119,000	120,000
Bexley	85,000	87,000	88,000	90,000
Brent	77,000	79,000	80,000	81,000
Bromley	121,000	124,000	126,000	127,000
Camden	47,000	48,000	49,000	51,000
Croydon	123,000	124,000	121,000	122,000
Ealing	100,000	103,000	105,000	101,000
Enfield	99,000	101,000	103,000	103,000
Greenwich	58,000	59,000	61,000	62,000
Hackney	38,000	39,000	40,000	40,000
Hammersmith and Fulham	37,000	38,000	39,000	39,000
Haringey	56,000	57,000	59,000	58,000
Harrow	88,000	89,000	90,000	90,000
Havering	90,000	91,000	92,000	94,000
Hillingdon	142,000	134,000	131,000	123,000
Hounslow	75,000	78,000	80,000	89,000
Islington	40,000	41,000	38,000	38,000
Kensington and Chelsea	43,000	43,000	43,000	43,000
Kingston upon Thames	57,000	57,000	58,000	59,000
Lambeth	60,000	61,000	67,000	65000
Lewisham	65,000	66,000	68,000	69,000
Merton	64,000	65,000	64,000	65,000
Newham	51,000	52,000	54,000	55,000
Redbridge	82,000	84,000	85,000	87,000
Richmond upon Thames	66,000	67,000	72,000	71,000
Southwark	55,000	55,000	59,000	60,000
Sutton	73,000	74,000	75,000	76,000
Tower Hamlets	35,000	37,000	35,000	36,000
Waltham Forest	63,000	64,000	66,000	67,000
Wandsworth	110,000	111,000	113,000	115,000
City of Westminster	62,000	62,000	61,000	59,000
London	2,339,000	2,369,000	2,401,000	2,414,000
England	19,574,000	20,006,000	20,468,000	20,973,000
4 × 4/SUV percentage	3.8%	4.4%	4.5%	4.5%

	2001	2002	2003	2004
Brent East	25,000	25,000	25,000	26,000
City of London	6,000	5,000	5,000	4,000
Barking and Dagenham	49,000	50,000	51,000	53,000
Barnet	123,000	125,000	127,000	129,000
Bexley	92,000	94,000	95,000	97,000
Brent	83,000	85,000	85,000	87,000
Bromley	130,000	132,000	133,000	136,000
Camden	53,000	53,000	52,000	51,000
Croydon	125,000	126,000	126,000	128,000
Ealing	103,000	105,000	105,000	107,000
Enfield	106,000	108,000	109,000	111,000
Greenwich	65,000	66,000	68,000	71,000
Hackney	42,000	42,000	42,000	43,000
Hammersmith and Fulham	39,000	39,000	39,000	42,000
Haringey	60,000	61,000	62,000	63,000
Harrow	93,000	89,000	89,000	91,000
Havering	95,000	97,000	99,000	101,000
Hillingdon	121,000	118,000	115,000	118,000
Hounslow	95,000	95,000	94,000	97,000
Islington	39,000	39,000	40,000	40,000
Kensington and Chelsea	45,000	46,000	47,000	47,000
Kingston upon Thames	60,000	62,000	61,000	62,000
Lambeth	66,000	66,000	66,000	65,000
Lewisham	70,000	71,000	72,000	74,000
Merton	65,000	66,000	66,000	67,000
Newham	57,000	59,000	59,000	61,000
Redbridge	89,000	91,000	92,000	94,000
Richmond upon Thames	71,000	72,000	73,000	74,000
Southwark	60,000	61,000	60,000	61,000
Sutton	78,000	77,000	78,000	80,000
Tower Hamlets	36,000	37,000	37,000	39,000
Waltham Forest	68,000	69,000	70,000	72,000
Wandsworth	116,000	107,000	102,000	98,000
City of Westminster	61,000	61,000	60,000	59,000
London	2,461,000	2,473,000	2,480,000	2,523,000
England	21,539,000	22,052,000	22,382,000	22,921,000
4 × 4/SUV percentage	4.9%	5.4%	6.2%	7.0%

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Courts

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs which agency is responsible for the administration of the courts. [16469]

Ms Harman: Her Majesty's Courts Service is responsible for the administration of the courts in England and Wales. HMCS started operation on 1 April 2005 and brought together, for the first time, all Crown, county and magistrates courts.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many trials in the Crown court lasted for a duration of nine months or more in each of the last 10 years. [1760]

Ms Harman: I will write to the hon. Member for North East Hertfordshire once the information is available.

Substantive answer from Harriet Harman to Oliver Heald:

You tabled a question for answer on 6 June in which you asked for information about the number of Crown Court trials that had taken place in the past ten years that had lasted more than nine months.

I wrote to you at that time to tell you that date was not then currently available to enable me to provide you with that information since work was still under way to enable detailed information to be extracted from court-based IT systems. I did, however indicate that I expected that work would be completed by the end of this month.

I am writing to you now to let you know that data is now available, although the court-based system from which it is extracted does not contain data before 1997. I can, however tell you that between 1997 and the end of June this year there have been eight completed trials in the Crown Court which have lasted more than nine months from the first day of the trial to the eventual outcome, that is to say either the conviction or acquittal of the defendant(s).

EU Electors

Mr. Hands: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many EU citizens are entitled to vote in local elections in each London borough; and what percentage of the total electorate this represents in each borough. [15761]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Greg Hands, dated 10 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking how many EU citizens are entitled to vote in local elections in each London borough, and the percentage of the total electorate this represents in each borough. (15761)

The attached table provides figures for December 2004 on the portion of the local government electorate for each London Borough (and the City of London) that are entitled to vote through European Union citizenship.

Total European/Local Government Electorate and Electorate Entitled to Vote through European Union Citizenship, December 2004

London borough	Electorate Qualifying through European Union Citizenship[1,2]	Total European/ Local Government Electorate	Percentage of European/ Local Electorate Qualifying through EU Citizenship
City of London	333	6,018	5.5
Barking and Dagenham	1,756	119,372	1.5
Barnet	8,004	214,421	3.7
Bexley	1,369	171,904	0.8
Brent	10,252	180,665	5.7
Bromley	3,458	228,983	1.5
Camden	11,378	144,326	7.9
Croydon	5,010	246,866	2.0
Ealing	11,685	215,814	5.4
Enfield	6,048	194,611	3.1
Greenwich	5,055	160,176	3.2
Hackney	6,904	129,274	5.3
Hammersmith and Fulham	10,460	116,144	9.0
Haringey	9,495	152,486	6.2
Harrow	3,739	162,049	2.3
Havering	947	175,668	0.5
Hillingdon	3,852	181,145	2.1
Hounslow	5,759	165,583	3.5
Islington	6,904	120,297	5.7
Kensington and Chelsea	14,608	98,629	14.8
Kingston upon Thames	3,340	99,014	3.4
Lambeth	13,016	203,055	6.4
Lewisham	5,650	177,731	3.2
Merton	6,184	135,678	4.6
Newham	7,651	171,815	4.5
Redbridge	2,319	181,192	1.3
Richmond upon Thames	4,614	120,146	3.8
Southwark	7,664	180,173	4.7
Sutton	2,069	131,315	1.6
Tower Hamlets	5,180	145,444	3.6
Waltham Forest	5,547	159,399	3.5
Wandsworth	11,378	211,816	5.4
Westminster	15,402	135,810	11.3

[1] These data are as reported by each London Borough to ONS.
[2] Excludes British and Irish citizens, and also Maltese and Cypriot citizens who qualify as Commonwealth citizens.
Source:
Office for National Statistics

Juries

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent research has been conducted into juries' deliberations. [16465]

Ms Harman: The law currently forbids any research into jury deliberations. In January 2005 my Department published a Consultation Paper—"Jury Research and Impropriety" and the relevant consultation period finished on 15 April. The responses have been analysed and an announcement of the Government's intentions for any change will be made shortly.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether *(a)* the trial judge and *(b)* the Court of Appeal is permitted to inquire into alleged impropriety by a jury. [16466]

Ms Harman: A trial judge is permitted to investigate alleged impropriety by jurors before the jury gives its verdict. If the alleged impropriety comes to light after a verdict has been given then the Court of Appeal is permitted to investigate.

Legal Aid Budget

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs which 12 barristers received the most money from the *(a)* criminal legal aid budget and *(b)* civil legal aid budget in each of the last three years; how much each received in each year; and if she will make a statement. [1138]

Bridget Prentice: The information requested has to be extracted from different computer system across Legal Service Commission and my Department and collecting

and collating that data will take some time. I will write to my hon. Friend as soon as the information is available.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs which was the most expensive case for the *(a)* criminal and *(b)* civil legal aid budget in 2004–05; how much was paid by way of (i) brief fee and (ii) refreshers to each of the barristers concerned; how much was paid to each solicitors firm involved; who the (A) barristers and (B) solicitors were; and if she will make a statement. [1139]

Bridget Prentice: Payments relating to one specific case may be spread over a number of financial years and identifying those will take some time. I will write to my hon. Friend as soon as the information is available.

Substantive answer from Bridget Prentice to Andrew Dismore:

You tabled a question asking which 12 barristers received the most money from the *(a)* criminal legal aid budget and *(b)* civil legal aid budget in each of the last three years; how much each received in each year; and if I would make a statement.

I said I would write when the information had been collated and the individuals had been notified. A number of issues were raised by the Bar Council and some of the individuals were concerned about the explanatory notes used in the past. These have now been addressed and I am now in a position to respond. I enclose a set of tables showing the twelve highest earning barristers for criminal and civil work in each of the last three years together with explanatory notes.

Highest Paid Barristers—Criminal Defence Service

	£
2004–05	
James Sturman Q.C.	1,180,000
Simon Bourne-Arton Q.C.	902,000
Kalyani Kaul	766,000
Gilbert Gray Q.C.	755,000
Balbir Singh	750,000
Peter Griffiths Q.C.	690,000
Trevor Burke Q.C.	683,000
Thomas Derbyshire	668,000
George Carter-Stephenson Q.C.	653,000
David Spens Q.C.	639,000
Vincent Coughlin Q.C.	627,000
Charles Benson	621,000
2003–04	
Richard Ferguson Q.C.	864,000
Oliver Blunt Q.C.	839,000
John C. Rees Q.C.	803,000
Abbas Lakha Q.C.	668,000
Courtenay Griffiths Q.C.	667,000
David H. Evans Q.C.	653,000
Nigel Lithman Q.C.	652,000
David Fish Q.C.	624,000
Kenneth MacDonald Q.C.	597,000
Michael Harrison Q.C.	595,000
Anthony Arlidge Q.C.	566,000
Malcolm Swift Q.C.	547,000
2002–03[1]	
Abbas Lakha[2] Q.C.	800,000
Oliver Blunt[3] Q.C.	703,000
John C. Rees Q.C.	664,000
Malcolm Swift Q.C.	637,000
James Sturman Q.C.	626,000
Christopher Sallon Q.C.	603,000
Howard Godfrey Q.C.	596,000
Jonathan Hall Q.C.	563,000
Robin Grey Q.C.	558,000
Michel Massih Q.C.	551,000
Richard Marks Q.C.	544,000
Andrew Bright Q.C.	537,000

[1] The list for 2002–03 differs slightly from that previously released. This is because additional payments were made to a barrister who would not otherwise have made it into the original list at the time of its release.
[2] Received Silk after 2002–03.
[3] Includes payments made which were not previously attributable to this practitioner (See note 4 in other qualifications).

Highest Paid Barristers—Community Legal Serving

	£
2004–05	
Ajmalul Hossain Q.C.	536,000
Paul Storey Q.C.	448,000
Jeremy Rosenblatt	418,000
Simeon Maskrey Q.C.	332,000
Alison Ball Q.C.	315,000
Jonathan Baker Q.C.	311,000
Anthony Hayden Q.C.	288,000
Stephen Knafler	283,000
Michael Keehan Q.C.	272,000
Robert Littlewood	251,000
Henry Setright Q.C.	245,000
Andrew McFarlane Q.C.	236,000
2003–04	
Paul Storey Q.C.	522,000
Elizabeth Gumbel Q.C.	467,000
Sally Bradley Q.C.	455,000
Stephen Knafler	445,000
Ian Peddie Q.C.	436,000
Pamela Scriven Q.C.	426,000
Jonathan Baker Q.C.	376,000
Michael Redfern Q.C.	374,000
Jeremy Rosenblatt	353,000
David Vaughan Q.C.	352,000
Alison Russell	345,000
Robin Tolson Q.C.	338,000
2002–03	
Lord Brennan Q.C.	606,000
Elizabeth Gumbel Q.C.	470,000
Paul Storey Q.C.	449,000
John Rowley	329,000
Sally Bradley Q.C.	328,000
Stephen Irwin Q.C.	314,000
Joanna Dodson Q.C.	284,000
Alison Ball Q.C.	279,000
Robin Oppenheim	277,000
Eleanor Hamilton Q.C.	277,000
Simeon Maskrey Q.C.	269,000
Jeremy Rosenblatt	249,000

These figures must be interpreted carefully and do not represent the personal earnings of the individuals listed in any one year. There are a number of reasons for this.

1. The amounts paid to each barrister listed represent payments for work covering many years, for a variety of cases. The amount an individual receives in any year fluctuates widely, and is to a large extent due to the variety of payment processes and schemes used by the Legal Services Commission and the Courts.

2. All the figures listed are inclusive of VAT (17.5 per cent) as paid, and disbursements incurred (e.g. travelling). Individuals must pay that VAT to HM Revenue & Customs.

3. Barristers will typically pay 25–30 per cent. of fees in professional expenses. Additionally, barristers face the same expenses as any other self employed person, including income tax and National Insurance contributions.

A number of other qualifications need to be added to these figures.

1. Payments are made after claims are carefully scrutinised by the Legal Services Commission or the Courts, and where necessary adjusted. The Legal Services Commission and the Courts may make payments many years after cases conclude.

2. While these figures represent gross payments actually made to the barristers during the year, some of those monies have been (or may in the future be) repaid to the Community Legal Service Fund by other parties. This will happen in cases where the legally aided party wins the case and recovers costs from the opponent. Once those costs are recovered the legally aided party's solicitor refunds some or all of the money to the CLS Fund. As a consequence the figures may not reflect the actual cost of the barristers' fees to the Fund. In some cases where costs are recovered from the losing party the actual cost to the CLS Fund may be very little or even nothing.

3. Not all payments could be verified with all the individuals concerned. Cases in dispute, where amounts listed as being paid to individual barristers were identified from records held by the Department and the Legal Services Commission, and the practitioner has no such record, have been included. Where possible, amounts have been verified by practitioners and adjusted where necessary.

4. For the CDS, not all payments are recorded centrally in a way that can be attributed to a barrister. Also, not all payments made to barristers are recorded in the database used to compile the list. These include manual legal aid payments and a small number of bills paid on account and payments made in the high court. Therefore, it is possible that the list could change in future following the inclusion of such payments in light of further information and subsequent verification.

Magistrates (Bedfordshire)

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) whether there is a shortage of magistrates to administer justice within the County of Bedfordshire; and if she will make a statement; [16402]

(2) what steps the Government is taking to encourage the recruitment of additional magistrates to administer justice within the County of Bedfordshire; and if she will make a statement. [16403]

Ms Harman: There are currently 307 magistrates serving in the two benches; Bedfordshire and Mid Bedfordshire and Luton and South Bedfordshire. Although there is a shortfall of 47 magistrates on the Luton and South Bedfordshire Bench, there are sufficient numbers of magistrates on the bench to administer justice in the area.

The Government introduced the Magistrates National Recruitment Strategy (MNRS) on 7 October 2003 as part of a wider Supporting Magistrates to Provide Justice Programme. It's three main objectives are:

To recruit and retain magistrates from a diverse spectrum of the population

To raise the profile of the magistracy and dispel generally held misconceptions about its make-up and entry requirements

To support the appointments process

The MNRS complements the Magistrates Shadowing Scheme, which is aimed at encouraging more people from ethnic minorities to apply to become magistrates and to gain valuable insight into the roles and responsibilities of a magistrate. The Bedfordshire Advisory Committee area has been selected to participate in the Magistrates Shadowing Scheme.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the average opium production in Afghanistan on 1 January *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 2000 and *(c)* 2005. [15156]

Dr. Howells: The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) conducts an annual survey into the level of opium poppy cultivation and production in Afghanistan. Full details can be found on their website http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/crop_monitoring.html.

According to the survey, opium production in 1997 and 2000 was estimated as follows:

	Production (tonnes)
1997	2,804
2000	3,276

On 29 August, the executive director of the UNODC Costa announced provisional cultivation and production figures for 2004–05 from their annual poppy survey. They estimated that opium production was around 4,100 metric tonnes (mt), a decrease of only 100 tonnes (2.4 per cent.) compared to 2004. Good weather and an absence of crop disease were responsible for a significant increase in yield since last year. UNODC will publish their final report in October, but these figures are unlikely to change. The yield figures are disappointing, but the cultivation figures give a better picture of farmers' intentions (a 21 per cent. reduction in poppy cultivation from 131,000 hectares (ha) in 2003–04 to 104,000 ha in 2004–05).

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs to what he attributes the increase in opium production in Afghanistan since 2001. [15157]

Dr. Howells: In July 2000, the Taliban imposed a ban on opium poppy cultivation. By July 2001, the tactics they employed had led to a 91 per cent. reduction. This ban was enforced with a combination of fear and bribery, and led to a rise in the price of opium so that those with opium stockpiles profited, many of whom colluded with the Taliban Government.

The lack of a viable central state and war-damaged infrastructure in Afghanistan created conditions in which opium cultivation could thrive once again. Opium is highly profitable for those controlling land, and for the warlords and Governors controlling peripheral parts of this mountainous country. There has been little incentive for them to engage with the embryonic central state and, until recently, government institutions have been unable to impact on the trade. President Karzai, with support from the international community, is working hard to change this and is increasing central government presence in the

provinces. The President has made clear that eliminating opium is vital for Afghanistan's future and is key to stability.

Progress has been made. The provisional cultivation and production figures for 2004–05 announced by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in August show an estimated 21 per cent. reduction in poppy cultivation over the previous year. Production and yield, however, are expected to be down since last year by only 2.4 per cent. as good weather and an absence of crop disease brought about a significant increase in yield. It is going to take a long time to uproot something so deeply entrenched in Afghanistan's culture and economy. But like the Afghans, the UK has always maintained that we are in this for the long term.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions the Government have had with their international partners on the co-ordination of the fight against the Afghan drug trade. [15158]

Dr. Howells: The international community is providing assistance across all strands of the Government of Afghanistan's 2005 counter narcotics (CN) implementation plan. We are working with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and other international partners, including the US, who have significant resources to bring to this issue and are very engaged. However, to date, levels of international assistance to the Afghanistan CN effort have struggled to match the scale of the problem. The UK Government are using their G8 lead nation status for Afghanistan CN to press for increased commitments, particularly in G8 and EU fora. We welcome in this respect the G8 Foreign and Home Ministers' recognition of the need for increased finance and capacity-building for CN, when they met in June this year. We are engaged bilaterally with a range of countries who have expressed an interest in providing specific support. We are encouraging them to channel funding through the Government of Afghanistan's CN Trust Fund (CNTF), and to provide mentors for the CN Criminal Justice Task Force and CN Police of Afghanistan.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how the funding allocated by the UK Government to combat the drugs trade in Afghanistan over the last three years has been spent. [15159]

Dr. Howells: The UK has provided some £300 million in development assistance to Afghanistan over the last three years which includes humanitarian assistance and support for security sector reform and counter-narcotics (CN). I refer to the reply I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Vale of York regarding financial assistance provided to Afghanistan on 7 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 546W.

The UK, as lead nation on CN, remains committed to supporting the Afghan Government in the implementation of their comprehensive 2005 CN Implementation Plan and in updating their national drug control strategy. We continue to work with the Afghan Government and others to increase activity in all areas of their strategy. As well as co-ordinating the activity of international partners, we are providing substantial financial and practical support—spending more than £100 million over the period 2003–06.

I refer to the reply I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Bognor Regis and Littlehampton (Mr. Gibb) on the counter narcotics programme in Afghanistan on 6 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 235W. On 5 September, I announced new UK funding for Afghan CN in a joint press conference with Afghan CN Minister Qaderi. The UK is to provide more than £270 million over the next three years. £130 million of the funding will be provided by the Department for International Development (DFID) with the rest coming from other Government Departments including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Ministry of Defence (MOD). I intend to make a further statement to the House in the next month.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Defence Secretary on the deployment of troops to Afghanistan during 2005 to tackle the opium trade. [15160]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has regular discussions with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence (John Reid) on a range of issues regarding Afghanistan, including both our military commitments in the country and our counter narcotics initiatives. Beneath this, there are the monthly Afghan strategy group meetings, attended by senior officials including representatives from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Ministry of Defence, and a cross Government ministerial level meeting, chaired by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence, which meets fortnightly and addresses the four key Afghan strands of governance, security, counter narcotics and reconstruction.

Biocontamination

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs further to his answer of 20 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 734W, on bio-contamination, if he will list the Government research groups examining more effective methods of detecting potentially dangerous contaminants received through the post. [15473]

Mr. Straw: The Scientific Development Branch of the Home Office is responsible for assessing commercially available equipment used for detecting potentially dangerous contaminants received through the post.

Common Fisheries Policy

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proposals have been advanced under the UK presidency of the EU, for the reform of the common fisheries policy; and what discussions Ministers and officials in his Department had on this subject at the General Affairs Council on 18 and 19 July 2005. [15736]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I refer the hon. Member to the White Paper entitled "Prospects for the EU in 2005—The UK presidency of the Union" presented to Parliament by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary on 30 June 2005. A copy of the White Paper

has been placed in the Library of the House. This sets out the UK presidency's plan for taking forward the EU fisheries negotiations. Fisheries was not discussed at the July General Affairs Council.

Council of Europe

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his policy on the development of the Council of Europe. [15920]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government believe the Council of Europe has an important role to play in promoting and protecting human rights, pluralist democracy and the rule of law throughout its 46 European member states. It is unique in enforcing human rights via its Court and Conventions.

The Council of Europe has a continuing long-term role in helping new democracies establish the institutions needed to uphold common European values. We support the development of closer links with other international organisations, such as the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the EU.

The Government welcomed the outcome of the Council of Europe's Third Summit in May 2005. The Summit's Declaration reaffirmed that the Council of Europe will pursue its core objective of preserving and promoting human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and that all its activities must contribute to this fundamental objective. The Government fully endorses this.

Cyprus

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Cyprus regarding the occupied part of the island; and if he will make a statement. [16103]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My right hon. Friends the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary met their Cypriot counterparts on 26 July 2005. They discussed a range of issues including prospects for a resumption of settlement negotiations, and measures to end the isolation of Turkish Cypriots.

Furthermore the Prime Minister and President Papadopoulos agreed in principle to set out a structured dialogue between our two countries to discuss matters of mutual interest in the EU, and the Cyprus problem. Our officials also regularly discuss all aspects of the Cyprus problem with their Cypriot counterparts.

EU Accession

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much *(a)* state and *(b)* EU aid (i) has been authorised and (ii) has been calculated as required to modernise the Bulgarian and Romanian (A) steel, (B) transport, (C) fisheries, (D) oil and (E) farm sectors, in the context of EU accession. [15914]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The EU provides extensive financial assistance to candidate countries via the Poland and Hungary Assistance for Restructuring of their Economies (PHARE), the Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (SAPARD) and the Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre Accession (ISPA) programmes, in order to help them meet the necessary EU standards and in line with the relevant pre-accession strategy for each country. PHARE provides assistance for projects in the field of implementation of the acquis, economic and social cohesion and cross-border co-operation. ISPA helps to finance environment and transport infrastructure. SAPARD provides assistance for projects in agriculture and rural development. EU funds are disbursed through annual project bids and the recipient countries are required to co-finance the projects agreed.

Bulgaria has been authorised to receive in the period 2000–06

	€ billion
PHARE	1.42
ISPA	0.877
SAPARD	0.415
Total	2.712

Romania has been authorised to receive in the period 2000–06

	€ billion
PHARE	0.939
ISPA	2.02
SAPARD	1.3
Total	4.259

For the first three years after accession, a further €16 billion has been earmarked for Bulgaria and Romania together. This will cover the same areas as PHARE, ISPA and SAPARD in the pre-accession period.

We do not maintain figures on the state aid provided by candidate countries to industry. Bulgaria and Romania will, under the terms of their Accession Treaty, be required to provide details of this within four months after accession.

EU Advisory Committee for the Co-ordination of Fraud Prevention

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the representatives to the EU Advisory Committee for the Co-ordination of Fraud Prevention; when the group last met; when it next plans to meet; whether it has addressed whistleblower cases; and what its work programme is. [16060]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The EU Advisory Committee for the Co-ordination of Fraud Prevention is made up of delegations from each of the member states, and is chaired by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF). Delegations' composition varies according to the subject matter discussed. The UK delegation normally includes a representative of HM Treasury's EU Finance Team. The Committee last met on 31 May 2005 and its next meeting is provisionally scheduled for 25–26 October. The Committee normally meets about three to four times a year. Its work

programme is set at short notice, in response to current issues. The Committee has never formally discussed whistleblower cases.

EU Bodies

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the *(a)* role and *(b)* duties of (i) the Security Office of the General Secretariat of the Council and (ii) the European Commission Security Directorate are, with particular reference to powers over UK nationals; and if he will make a statement. [16079]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The role and duties of the Security Office of the General Secretariat of the Council are to protect persons, buildings, property, activities and classified information in the premises of the EU Council and of its General Secretariat. In pursuit of this role and in accordance with the Council Security Regulations, Security Office staff inspect and assess security arrangements and make recommendations to ensure that Council security is maintained. They also enforce the security rules in force on Council premises. The security rules apply to citizens of all countries working in, or visiting, Council premises. That includes UK citizens.

Full information about the Security Office's role is contained in the EU legislative acts which define the Security Office's mandate, Council Decision 2001/264/EC of 19 March 2001, and Council Secretary General/High Representative Decision 127/01 of 28 June 2001. The text of the Council Decision can be found in the *Official Journal of the European Communities:* L 101 of 11 April 2001, p. 10.

The role and duties of the European Commission Security Directorate are similar to those of the Council General Secretariat Security Office, but apply to the Commission's premises.

European Contractors

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list contractors based in other EU member states that are providing services to his Department. [15453]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office network extends to hundreds of posts worldwide, including over 50 posts in the EU. All contract for services locally. Contracts are awarded in line with the UK's objective of achieving value for money and in line with EU Treaty obligations on transparency and free movement of goods and services. Compiling a full list of contractors based in other EU member states providing services to the department would incur disproportionate cost.

General Lighthouse Fund

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received from the Department for Transport regarding the cessation of payments from the UK general lighthouse fund for the provision of navigational aids in Irish territorial waters. [16051]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: After initial contact from Department for Transport officials, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office helped to put them into direct contact with their Irish counterparts to discuss the funding of navigational aids in UK and Irish waters.

Gibraltar

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the status of negotiations with Spain on the future of Gibraltar. [16077]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There are currently no negotiations between the UK and Spain on the future of Gibraltar.

The Trilateral Forum, created through a joint statement by the Governments of Spain, the United Kingdom and Gibraltar on 16 December 2004 gives an equal voice for all three parties to discuss matters relating to Gibraltar. Any party may raise any issue relating to Gibraltar in this forum.

So far, the forum has concentrated on areas of possible local co-operation, including expanded use of the airport, telephones, pensions and problems at the border.

Iraq

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 12 July 2005, *Official report,* column 877W, on Iraq, if he will make a statement on the development of a Secretary General/High Representative for Iraq in the context of paragraph 9 of Council Joint Action 2005/190/CFSP of 7 March, *Official Journal,* L62 vol 48 of 9 March. [16318]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There is no Secretary General/High Representative for Iraq. Paragraph 9 of the aforementioned Council Joint Action refers to Javier Solana, the Secretary General of the European Union and its High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy.

Israel

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the Israeli security wall. [16590]

Dr. Howells: We fully recognise Israel's right to self-defence. A barrier is a reasonable way to achieve this. But the barrier's route should be on or behind the Green Line, and not on occupied territory. Construction of the barrier on Palestinian land is illegal.

On 15 September the Israeli High Court ordered the re-routing of the barrier around Alfei Menashe, a West Bank settlement near the Green Line, because of its damaging impact on Palestinian villagers in the area. This ruling will reduce the humanitarian impact of the barrier in that area. However, we continue to be concerned at the route of the barrier on occupied territory. The route is particularly damaging around Jerusalem, as this risks cutting the city off from the West Bank and dividing the West Bank in two.

We continue to raise our concerns over the barrier with the Israeli Government at all levels. Most recently I discussed this with Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom and Housing Minister Isaac Herzog during my visit to Israel on the 28–29 September.

Lebanon

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the political situation in the Lebanon; and if he will make a statement. [16102]

Dr. Howells: The Government of Fouad Siniora is committed to addressing the need for political, economic and security sector reforms in Lebanon. The UK stands ready to assist the Lebanese Government to implement these reforms. This was demonstrated by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary's participation in a meeting of like-minded Foreign Ministers to support Lebanon on 19 September.

We are concerned by the recent bomb explosions in and around Beirut, which have killed one person and injured over 30. We condemn all such attacks which seek to destabilise Lebanon. The UK supports full implementation of United Nations Security Council resolutions 1559 and 1614, both of which promote the sovereignty of Lebanon, and encourages all parties in Lebanon to assist with their implementation.

Moldova

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his Department's policy towards Moldova, with particular reference to Romanian accession to the EU. [15922]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Romania's accession to the EU will mean that the opportunities and challenges associated with Moldova, including the problems presented by the frozen conflict in Transnistria, will lie on the EU's common external border. This will strengthen the EU's common interest in Moldova. We fully support the EU's European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), which aims to share the benefits of the EU's enlargement with neighbouring countries and prevent the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbours. We continue to encourage Moldova to implement the reforms set out in the jointly agreed ENP Action Plan, which was launched in February this year.

We are also anxious to see progress towards a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Transnistria and fully support a more active role for the EU in efforts to find a solution. In this context we welcome the appointment and work of the EU Special Representative, the EU's participation as an observer to the five-sided negotiation process, and the decision to send an EU border assistance mission to Moldova.

Services in the Internal Market Directive

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received regarding the EU Directive on Services in the Internal Market from *(a)* business organisations, *(b)* trade unions, *(c)* other organisations and *(d)* individuals. [15431]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Progress on the EU Directive on Services in the Internal Market is a priority for our presidency of the EU. Independent analysis indicates that the Services Directive will increase EU GDP by 0.5 per cent. bringing high quality services and lower prices to consumers and creating hundreds of thousands of jobs. The Government consulted widely on the Directive's implications when the Commission made its original proposal. A summary of representations made in response to that consultation are available on the DTI's website, at: http://www.dti.gov.uk/ccp/topics2/pdf2/serviceresponses.pdf

Sri Lanka

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Sri Lanka regarding the peace process; and if he will make a statement. [16101]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary last had discussions with the Government of Sri Lanka on the peace process when he met Foreign Minister Kadirgamar in London on 14 March. The tragic assassination of Mr. Kadirgamar on 12 August was an unconscionable act of terrorism which we and our international partners have condemned unreservedly. This and the ongoing violence in Eastern Sri Lanka have put the Ceasefire Agreement in Sri Lanka under increasing strain and the peace process is facing its most serious challenge since the Ceasefire Agreement came into force in 2002. It is incumbent on both the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Government of Sri Lanka to implement the Ceasefire Agreement fully.

In statements on 19 September and 26 September respectively the Tokyo Co-Chairs, including the UK as the EU Presidency, and the EU condemned the LTTE's continuing use of violence and called on the LTTE to take immediate public steps to demonstrate their commitment to the peace process and their willingness to change. An immediate end to political assassinations and the recruitment of child soldiers would be two such steps. It is essential that the LTTE responds. The European Union has also made clear that delegations from the LTTE will no longer be received in any of the EU member states until further notice. The EU is also actively considering the listing of the LTTE as an organisation engaged in terrorism (the UK has proscribed the LTTE since 2001). We also deplore the activities of paramilitary groups which fuel the cycle of violence and unrest. The Government of Sri Lanka have a responsibility under the Ceasefire Agreement to disarm or relocate these groups from the north and east.

We hope that the peace process will be invigorated following the Presidential elections in Sri Lanka on 17 November. We continue strongly to support the efforts of Norway as peace process facilitator.

Turkey

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he

has had with the Turkish Government regarding *(a)* the application to join the EU and *(b)* Cyprus; and if he will make a statement. [16104]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I warmly welcome the opening of accession negotiations with Turkey on 3 October. In the context of our efforts as presidency to implement the December 2004 European Council decision to open negotiations, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has held extensive and detailed contacts with the Turkish Government, including on matters relating to Cyprus.

Uzbekistan

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government are taking to support the establishment of democracy in Uzbekistan. [15598]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Our ambassador in Tashkent, David Moran, has continued to impress upon President Karimov's Government the importance of social and political reform and our conviction that democracy, political pluralism and respect for the rule of law are essential for the long-term stability of Uzbekistan. We have made repeated calls on President Karimov's Government to allow free and fair elections in Uzbekistan. In a statement on 29 December 2004, my hon. Friend, the then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Bill Rammell), made clear our view that Uzbekistan's most recent election, held on 26 December, had fallen far short of international standards in these respects.

We fund a number of projects aimed at promoting democracy, civil society, and human rights in Uzbekistan. For example, our embassy in Tashkent is supporting a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) registration and capacity-building project. This provides a lawyer to unregistered NGOs, assisting them in preparing documentation for registration, and appealing in the case of refusal. We are also sponsoring an International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT) project aimed at increasing the effectiveness of the Uzbek authorities' efforts in tackling the problem of torture.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Correspondence

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality how many letters to her Department from hon. Members in session *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06 remain unanswered, broken down by those which are (i) one month old, (ii) two months old, (iii) three months old, (iv) four months old and (v) over six months old. [13853]

Meg Munn: For the year 2004, the Department has no outstanding letters to hon. Members that remain unanswered by the Minister for Women.

For the year 2005 to date the Department has six outstanding letters to hon. Members that await response from the Minister for Women. Of these, one is two months old.

The Cabinet Office, on an annual basis, publishes a report to Parliament on the performance of Departments in replying to Members/Peers correspondence. The Report for 2004 was published on 6 April 2005.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Animal Neglect

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action is taken by her Department to monitor the enforcement of legislation in respect of animal neglect cases; how many successful prosecutions have been brought in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement. [15784]

Mr. Bradshaw: Data are provided by Defra for Great Britain in the two tables as follows. The number of welfare inspections carried out on farms by the State Veterinary Service in each of the last five years are detailed in table *(a)*:

Table A

	Number of inspections
2004	5,455
2003	5,060
2002	4,639
2001 (FMD)[1]	2,733
2000	6,901

[1] FMD inspections significantly reduced due to the foot and mouth disease outbreak

The number of successful prosecutions for keepers of farm animals in each of the last five years are detailed in table *(b)*:

Table B

	Banned	*Cautioned*	*Guilty (but not banned)*
2004	4	1	13
2003	4	12	16
2002	3	6	26
2001	3	1	21
2000	8	26	19

Note:
Under the Agriculture Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1968 and Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulation the offence used to carry out prosecutions is Unnecessary Pain and Unnecessary Distress and not neglect.

Data are provided in table *(c)* for the number of offenders[1] found guilty for offences relating to animal cruelty and neglect for England and Wales, 1999–2003.

Table C

Statute	*Number of offenders*				
	1999	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act, 1986	2	2	—	—	1
Protection of Animals Act, 1911 (as amended)	828	861	754	768	783
Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 Section 8	1	4	3	2	—
Performing Animals (Regulation) Act 1925	—	—	—	—	—
Protection of Animals Act, 1934	—	1	—	—	1
Docking and Nicking of Horses Act, 1949	—	2	—	—	—
Pet Animals Act, 1951	9	14	8	6	6
Cockfighting Act, 1952	—	—	—	—	—
Protection of Animals (Amendment) Act 1954	21	15	11	13	12
Animal Health Act, 1981, Sections 40–42, 46 and 49 and Orders made under Sections 8, 9, 37, 38, 39 and 43	51	23	23	35	19
Slaughterhouses Act, 1974	4	—	—	1	1
Abandonment of Animals Act, 1960, Section 1	12	13	19	20	15
Animal and Animal Products (Import and Export) Regulations 1988	—	—	—	4	2
Animals (Cruel Poisons) Act, 1962	—	—	1	—	—
Animal Boarding Establishments Act, 1963	6	4	8	3	2
Riding Establishments Acts, 1964 and 1970	—	2	1	1	—
Slaughter of Poultry Act, 1967	7	—	—	—	—
Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1968, Sections 1, 2 and 6	11	10	5	3	2
Protection of Badgers Act, 1992 (except Section 13)	10	4	5	5	4
Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 Section 9	—	—	3	3	2
Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 Section 11	3	—	—	—	—
Wild Mammals (Protection) Act1996	—	4	4	3	5
Protection of Animals (Amendment) Act 2000 SS 3 and 4	—	—	—	1	—
Total	965	959	845	868	855

[1] Principal offence basis

Animal Waste

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the European Commission proposals to prohibit the use of tallow as a fuel to run plants which dispose of animal waste. [15292]

Mr. Bradshaw: There is no such proposal.

The burning of waste tallow as a fuel is currently subject to control as a waste recovery operation under Article 10 of the Waste Framework Directive (75/442/EEC). This requirement is supplemented by the requirements of the Waste Incineration Directive (2000/76/EC) which comes fully into force on 28 December 2005. It will then be necessary for any such plant also to meet the emissions, monitoring and other operating requirements of the Waste Incineration Directive. It is for plant operators to decide whether to invest in any improvements which may be needed to meet those requirements or to switch to a fuel which is not subject to controls under the directive.

In June I wrote to the European Commission expressing the UK view that the existing requirements of the Waste Framework Directive and the Directive on integrated pollution prevention and control (96/61/EC) are sufficient to ensure, that the burning of waste tallow as fuel is carried in ways which protect the environment and public and animal health. I called for the Waste Incineration Directive and the Animal By-Products Regulation (1774/2002) to be amended accordingly although, if agreed, there is little prospect of any amendments coming into effect by the end of this year.

Badgers

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to improve the protection of badgers from *(a)* baiters and *(b)* farmers. [16490]

Mr. Bradshaw: Under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, it is an offence for anyone to kill or take a badger, or to attempt to do so, except under licence or in strictly controlled circumstances defined in the Act. The Act also makes it an offence to injure, ill-treat or dig for a badger. Additional protection from baiters is provided for all animals under the Protection of Animals Act 1911. And there is a range of offences under the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996 which support action against anyone who sets out to inflict unnecessary suffering on any wild animal.

The level of protection provided for badgers is unique for a non-endangered animal. This reflects the concern this Government have about gratuitous acts of cruelty to badgers, which have occurred too often in the past.

Enhanced powers for wildlife inspectors are being introduced in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill. Supplementing existing measures under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, these will provide a further level of protection by increasing the opportunities to identify and deal with anyone intent on damaging, destroying or interfering with badgers.

BSE

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list documents requested under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 which have been withheld relating to the BSE outbreak; and what obligations arise from UK participation in the Aarhus Convention in this respect. [16059]

Mr. Bradshaw: Under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, information is requested as opposed to documents. Defra does not therefore hold a list of withheld documents. The Department has received several requests for information about BSE issues and has responded in accordance with the terms of the FOI Act or the Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs) as appropriate. The EIRs implement the UK's obligations under the Aarhus Convention.

Both the FOIA and the EIRs contain exemptions from the duty to disclose. In some cases, information was withheld because it fell within one of these exemptions. If individuals are unhappy with the way their requests have been dealt with under the FOIA or EIRs, they may ask the Department to conduct an internal review. If they remain dissatisfied, they may complain to the Information Commissioner. We are not aware that the Information Commissioner has received any complaints about these cases.

Carbon Emissions

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Government has taken in response to suggested scenarios for reducing carbon emissions set out in the 22nd Report of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution; and what outcomes have been achieved. [15544]

Mr. Morley: The Government accepted the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution's recommendation that the UK should put itself on a path towards a reduction in carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions of some 60 per cent. from current levels by about 2050. The Energy White Paper (CM 5761), published by the DTI in February 2003, outlined a number of ways in which the 60 per cent. goal could be achieved. The EWP is being taken forward by the inter-departmental Sustainable Energy Policy Network (SEPN).

The current review of the UK Climate Change Programme (2000) is looking at how existing measures are performing and the range of measures that might be put in place in the future to help us achieve our goal of a 20 per cent. reduction in CO_2 emissions by 2010 and to put us on a path to make

> "real progress by 2020 towards our longer-term goal of some 60 per cent. reduction in CO_2 emissions below 1990 levels by about 2050".

Chewing Gum

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department is taking to help reduce clear up costs for local authorities by encouraging manufacturers, importers and retailers to market less adhesive chewing gum. [16408]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government are working closely with the chewing gum industry to reduce the amount of chewing gum that is irresponsibly littered on our streets. The industry form part of the Chewing Gum Action Group that brings together Government, the Local Government Association, Chartered Institute of Waste Management and others to explore and implement ways of reducing the amount of chewing gum dropped on our streets.

The industry is committed to developing a biodegradable gum and continue to update Government on their progress. While this work continues, the action group is pursuing a number of initiatives, including a recently piloted awareness campaign in Preston, Manchester and Maidstone, the results of which will help inform the development of a wider campaign and enable other local authorities to run similar campaigns in their own area. The gum industry are also looking at incorporating the campaign advertising into their point of sale material.

Climate Change

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the G8 plan of action on climate change contains legally binding provisions on participating Governments. [15083]

Mr. Morley: The G8 Plan of Action on Climate Change, as with all G8 agreements ever made, is not legally binding.

Common Agricultural Policy

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on progress in the enforcement of cross-compliance standards under the Common Agricultural Policy *(a)* in the UK and *(b)* across the EU. [15477]

Jim Knight: The information requested is as follows:

(a) Considerable progress has been made on the enforcement of cross-compliance standards in England since their introduction on 1 January 2005. Checks against pre-existing individual standards have taken place throughout the year where there are existing inspection regimes operating, and the results will be taken into account for cross-compliance purposes. Detailed guidance for inspectors has been produced in liaison with the specialist enforcement agencies and devolved Administrations, as well as a comprehensive Payments Reduction Matrix which the Rural Payments Agency will use when considering payment reductions.

In other parts of the UK, the implementation of cross-compliance is a matter for the devolved Administrations. However, the UK has worked to achieve consistency in approach where possible, especially in regards to cross-boundary holdings.

(b) Cross-compliance is one of the key elements of CAP reform. Across the European Union all member states are required to implement and enforce cross-compliance in accordance with the Commission regulations.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on progress in the modulation of funds from the first to the second pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* the EU. [15482]

Jim Knight: From 2005, modulation will be applied on a compulsory basis to all EU direct payments made in the EU 15. A 3 per cent. rate of compulsory EU modulation will transfer funding from CAP Pillar One subsidies to rural development Pillar Two payments in 2005. The rate will rise to 4 per cent. in 2006, and 5 per

cent. from 2007 onwards. The regime will apply in the 10 new member states by 2013 at the latest when their direct payments are due to reach EU 15 levels.

In addition, the UK has secured agreement for an additional rate of national modulation to be levied over and above the EU rate. The additional national modulation rate in England is necessary in order to finance an expansion of our agri-environment schemes, and in particular to implement entry level stewardship. The Secretary of State announced last year that this national rate of modulation will be 2 per cent. in 2005 and 6 per cent. in 2006, bringing the overall rate in England to 5 per cent. and 10 per cent. in 2005 and 2006 respectively. Modulation will be 100 per cent. match funded by the Exchequer until at least 2006, which doubles the amount of money available for agri-environment measures.

We have been pressing the Commission for a modulation mechanism that will allow us to levy additional national modulation in the next rural development programming period to enable us to properly fund agri-environment agreements from 2007. A declaration was given at the Agriculture Council of 20 June 2005 that discussions on voluntary modulation will continue as part of the financial perspective negotiations.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on progress in the reduction of intervention rates under the Common Agricultural Policy. [15483]

Jim Knight: Intervention prices have been reduced in CAP reform agreements over the last decade or so. Intervention prices for most commodities have been substantially reduced.

The cereals intervention price was reduced by around 35 per cent. over the period 1993–94 to 1995–96 and by a further 15 per cent. in the period 2000–01 to 2001–02. It now stands at €101.31. From the start of the 2004–05 marketing year, rye was excluded from the list of eligible crops for cereals intervention, reducing the potential volume of stocks and therefore expenditure.

The rice intervention price was reduced by 15 per cent. over the period 1997–98 and 1999–2000. Under the 2003 reforms it was further reduced by almost 50 per cent. from the start of the 2004–05 marketing year. It now stands at €150/t and intervention purchasing is limited to 75,000 tonnes of rice per annum.

The beef intervention price was reduced by 20 per cent. in 1999. It now stands at €1,560/t.

The 2003 CAP reform agreement included phased reductions in intervention prices in the milk sector over a four year period as set out in the table:

	1 July 2000 to 30 June 2004	*1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005*	*1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006*	*1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007*	*From 1 July 2007*
Butter					
Price €/100 kg	328.20	305.23	282.44	259.52	246.39
Percentage cut	—	7	7	7	4
Skimmed milk powder					
Price €/100 kg	205.52	195.24	184.97	174.69	—
Percentage cut	—	5	5	5	—

The sugar intervention price has been at €631.90/t for white sugar and €523.70/t for raw sugar since the 1993–94 marketing year. As part of the current negotiations to reform the sugar regime, the European Commission have proposed the abolition of the intervention mechanism and price for sugar.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on progress in the decoupling of subsidy and production under the Common Agricultural Policy; if she will list the sectors to which decoupling will apply; and if she will list those EU member states who have opted out of decoupling. [15484]

Jim Knight: Under the CAP reform agreement reached in June 2003, the main direct payments in the arable, beef and sheep sectors are replaced by the new decoupled Single Payment Scheme (SPS). Ten member states introduced the SPS at the earliest possible date, 2005, and five in 2006. (Separate arrangements apply to the 10 new member states.) Additionally, the direct payment in the dairy sector is being integrated into the SPS between 2005 and 2007. Member states also have the option to re-couple a limited percentage of certain payments when introducing the SPS. For those member states introducing the reforms in 2005, all bar Ireland and Luxembourg have made some use of these options, including the UK in respect of a national envelope for the beef sector in Scotland.

In the second wave of reform agreed in May 2004, a significant part of the production linked payments in the tobacco, hops, olive oil and cotton sectors are also to be decoupled from 2006. In addition, the Commission has recently proposed reform of the sugar sector which would see compensation for changes to the market regime being integrated into the SPS.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment her Department has undertaken of different policy options for reform of the Common Agricultural Policy. [15494]

Jim Knight: We have secured notable successes in reforming the CAP in recent years, which our assessments show will make it less trade-distorting, and environmentally damaging and help boost the competitiveness of farming.

We want to build on that model, including through the reform of the sugar regime, for which my Department has published a detailed assessment of the European Commission's proposals. We will also assess the implications of reform of the fruit and vegetable, flax and hemp and wine regimes when proposals for

those sectors come forward next year, and we will pursue the policy options mandated by the World Trade Organisation as part of the Doha Development Agenda.

In the context of the EU's Future Financing negotiations, we have suggested a review of the whole EU budget—including, but not limited to, agriculture—midway through the next EU financial perspective (2007–13). We are currently consulting other member states on their views and will use the findings to inform our thinking on options for any subsequent changes to the CAP budget.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her policy is on the establishment of a cap on the level of support given to any single recipient of subsidy under the Common Agricultural Policy. [15495]

Jim Knight: The Government have had concerns about setting a ceiling on individual farm subsidy payments because it would add further distortions to the system.

Payment limits would have a disproportionate impact on many of the larger, more efficient farms which are better able to compete in an increasingly globalised and liberalised market, and thus may perpetuate the industry's dependence on subsidy and discriminate against those countries with the best farm structure to compete globally.

A ceiling could also discourage the industry from restructuring and divert farmers into adopting a business structure which maximised subsidy by avoiding the impacts of the ceiling, rather than adopting the most efficient, market-based business model to provide long-term economic viability.

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Local Environment, Marine and Animal Welfare to respond to the letter from the hon. Member for West Worcestershire of 5 July about the trawler Success III. [15101]

Mr. Bradshaw: I responded to the hon. Member on 2 August.

Countryside Agency

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost was of the Countryside Agency's *(a)* Land Access and Recreation Project, *(b)* Commission for Rural Communities Project and *(c)* Making a Difference Project in 2004–05. [15743]

Jim Knight: The Countryside Agency did not have a landscape, access and recreation project in 2004–05. There was activity in this area consisting of a limited restructuring of the former 'B' directorate into a new landscape, access and recreation division (LAR). Financial information on this aspect of the Agency's work could only be made available at disproportionate cost.

Steps were taken to launch a new Commission for Rural Communities division as a distinct body within the Countryside Agency's legal framework on 9 March 2005, pending the passage of legislation to establish the Commission as a statutory body in its own right. The Regulatory Impact Assessment for the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill contained an estimate of around £458,000 for the cost incurred in 2004–05 for the establishment and launch of the Commission. We will be updating the Assessment when the Bill begins its passage through the House of Lords.

Some £166,000 was spent on the Making a Difference project which related to sharing learning from the Countryside Agency's socio-economic work, including through events and publications, from its six years of operation.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the projected costs are of implementing the Countryside Agency's 2004 Diversity Review recommendations. [15746]

Jim Knight: I expect to receive a draft action plan from the Countryside Agency at the end of December, drawing on the findings of the diversity review. Consultation will follow and we will look at the costs of implementation in the light of the options which we decide to pursue.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost was of the Countryside Agency's 2004 Diversity Review. [15750]

Jim Knight: The programme budget for the Diversity Review is £1.5 million over the three years 2004–07.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost was of the Countryside Agency's *(a)* staff, *(b)* publications, *(c)* research, *(d)* incidentals and *(e)* total budget in 2004–05. [15751]

Jim Knight: The Countryside Agency's Annual Report and Accounts for 2004–05 were signed off by the Comptroller and Auditor General on 14 July 2005. They were laid before Parliament on 19 July 2005 and disclose the following costs incurred during 2004–05:

(a) Staff costs—£22.8 million, including a one-off provision of £3.2 million of redundancy costs arising from the devolution of socio-economic and social and community funding to regional development agencies and government offices in the regions respectively.

(b) The cost of publications was £1.3 million.

(c) The amount defined by the Agency as 'investigations, inquiries, research and experiments' is £13.1 million. Research as such would have comprised a small proportion of this sum.

(d) 'Incidentals' are not separately defined, and would have formed a small proportion of 'other operating costs' (£20.6 million).

(e) Total budget for the year (excluding the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund at £2.3 million which is funded separately) was £92.5 million.

Departmental Websites

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the websites that come under her Department's responsibility; what the cost was of each in the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to each site in that year. [15905]

Jim Knight: Defra directly operates a number of websites, including the main Defra website (www.defra.gov.uk) and the Government's sustainable development website (www.sustainable-development.gov.uk).

Direct operating costs—the staff costs for the central team with lead responsibility for updating and maintaining websites—are estimated to be around £352,000 for the current financial year. Additional costs arise from the activities of a large number of staff in business units across the Department, contributing to the content of websites as part of their communications activities, but an overall cost for this could not be readily estimated. Website hosting services—as well as a range of IT applications—are provided as part of Defra's overall IT service provision and the costs could not be readily disaggregated.

A number of other websites are operated by or on behalf of the Department, its agencies and non-departmental public bodies, for which costs are either covered by the budgets for specific programmes (and not separately identified), or included within the above figures. Detailed information is not held centrally for such websites, and could not be obtained without incurring disproportionate cost.

The average number of visitors per month during the year 2004–05 was as follows: www.defra.gov.uk—204,000; www.sustainable-development.gov.uk—20,000.

Emissions

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment has been made of the likely impact on carbon dioxide emissions in the next decades of the expansion of energy generating capacity in *(a)* China, *(b)* India, *(c)* Brazil, *(d)* Mexcio and *(e)* South Africa. [14484]

Mr. Morley: As the 2004 International Energy Agency "World Energy Outlook" indicates, economic growth is the most important driver of energy demand. As Brazil, China, India, Mexico and South Africa continue to experience rapid economic growth, the energy needs of these countries will also continue to grow rapidly.

Meeting energy security needs and ensuring access to energy is a major priority for all countries. Economic expansion with the use of existing technologies will have significant implications on carbon dioxide emissions in the forthcoming decades.

The "World Energy Outlook" points out that is possible to promote economic expansion and meet the challenges of energy security and climate change, through the use of alternative, cleaner technologies. The Government firmly believes that technological co-operation with emerging economies such as China, India, Brazil, Mexico and South Africa is vital in developing and deploying low carbon technology globally.

At the Gleneagles summit, the UK and our G8 partners demonstrated this commitment to technological co-operation, agreeing a package of measures to work with emerging economies to accelerate progress in clean coal technology, including joint work on a radical solution—stripping out and burying greenhouse gases—which could save one-third of all energy related emissions by 2050.

Energy Efficiency

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what targets she has set on improving energy efficiency; and how she intends to achieve these targets. [15847]

Mr. Morley: The Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate is the main vehicle for systematically assessing, managing, reporting and improving Government performance of its land and buildings. Targets for energy were published in February 2004 and cover absolute carbon reduction, energy efficiency, renewable energy, good quality Combined Heat and Power (CHP), a long term strategy for renewables and the inclusion of energy clauses in estate management contracts.

Information on the specific targets and Defra's response can be found on its website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/sdstrategy/operations/parte.htm

Environment Agency

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many people are employed in the Environment Agency's customer service team; and what the *(a)* employment and *(b)* other costs have been to date. [15170]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency's National Customer Contact Centre currently employs 70 people. Staff costs for 2004–05 were £1.04 million, with total operational costs of £1.27 million. This year's total budget is £1.6 million, of which £1.4 million will be spent on staff.

The agency's National Customer Contact Centre was set up in 2002. Information system development costs, including implementation, support and maintenance for 2002–05 were £2.816 million. Wider project costs—including accommodation set up, recruitment and other project costs for 2002–05 were £889,000.

As well as a small customer service team in its Head Office (employing 2.5 full time equivalents), staff in the devolved teams working across England and Wales cover a variety of external engagement tasks, including customer and stakeholder relations. For much of the work of the Environment Agency there is no straightforward divide between customer services and improving the way the agency functions. Beyond this, the Environment Agency has signed up to the Customer Charter and regards all staff as having a customer service role.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the media budget of *(a)* the Environment Agency and *(b)* Environment Agency retail is in 2005–06; and if she will make a statement. [15171]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency's 2005–06 budget for media relations activity is £1,470,000. This is comprised almost entirely of staff costs, with a small spend on supporting activities including training, monitoring and evaluation to enhance the effectiveness of its media communication activities for the benefit of the public.

The Environment Agency places significant importance on disseminating information and advice and accounting publicly for its activities to the widest possible audience in a cost-effective way. It therefore employs dedicated press officers in its head office, and in each of its eight regions, to make the public aware of the agency and its responsibilities, to reinforce its regulatory role and generally to ensure strong coverage of environmental issues. It strives to reach national, regional and local audiences by securing editorial coverage in all types of media.

The media is also a vital communication channel during civil emergencies, including flooding and environmental incidents. The Environment Agency's press officers provide a 24 hour service, 365 days of the year, to ensure that important information can always be targeted to appropriate news and other media outlets. In the event of flooding, press officers are in the front line in disseminating warnings, information and advice to the public via the media.

The agency does not hold a budget for retail.

Equality and Diversity

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much the Department has spent promoting equality and diversity in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [14666]

Jim Knight: Defra is fully committed to the diversity and equality agenda and has policies 'embedded' throughout its HR policies as well as processes in place to ensure that there is no unfair discrimination on any grounds.

Defra operates in a global market, and the UK is a multi-cultural society. Defra needs representatives from different ethnic backgrounds and different minority groups to compete in business terms. It needs staff who can understand its customers and their cultures, who can communicate with them effectively, reflecting the communities in which Defra works. These include the farming, fishing, food and water industries, together with other industries challenged to meet consumers' requirements, as well as the public itself living within either rural or urban areas.

Defra's diversity and equality policies are promoted through a number of initiatives. These include funding of specific diversity and equality-related training courses; e-learning diversity training packages; in-house staff networks, which provide support for staff in minority groups; and mentoring schemes for minority groups.

The current staffing figure for the Department's Diversity and Equality Unit is standing at 10, of which three are working on a part-time basis as part of Defra's flexible working opportunities.

The latest available figures for the cost of these initiatives since Defra was created are indicated as follows:

	Activity	*Type*	*Cost*
2001–02	Training	Diversity and Equality Training (Legislative Compliance and Diversity Management)	35,000
	Staff networks × 4	In-house	1,300
Total	—	—	36,300
2002–03	Training	Diversity Toolkit[1]	4,784
		Diversity and Equality Training (Legislative Compliance and Diversity Management)	[2]100,200
	(2002 2004)[3]	Pathways and Disability	7,000
		Bursary (mentoring schemes)	5,000
	Staff networks × 4	In-house	374
	Work Placements	Fast Stream-Ethnic Minority Scheme	6,340
		Disabled Candidate Scheme	6,272
Total	—	—	129,990
2003–04	Training	Diversity and Equality Training (Legislative Compliance and Diversity Management)	52,800
		PC ROM e-learning multi-media package[4]	55,000
	Staff networks × 5	In-house	3,669
	Work Placements	Fast Stream—Ethnic Minority Scheme	6,840
Total	—	—	118,309
2004–05	Training	Diversity and Equality Training (Legislative Compliance and Diversity Management)	42,400
		PC ROM[5]	44,650
	Staff networks × 5	In-house	7,140
Total	—	—	94,190
2005 to date	Training	RRA Legislative Compliance	9,200
	Staff networks × 6	In-house	368
Total	—	—	9,568
Grand total	—	—	388,357

[1] Development and production of Interactive computer training package dealing with diversity and equality issues.
[2] The cost of diversity and Equality training here was high, due to the creation of Defra as a new Department.
[3] The cost of these schemes was spread over two years.
[4] This was an e-learning multi-media package, 'Looking Beyond The Difference' designed for use by individuals via Defra's intranet, and for corporate training—produced in conjunction with external consultants. Being in the lead with this package, Defra has demonstrated this to other Government Departments as sharing best practise, and DWP have asked for permission to re-brand.
[5] "Looking Beyond The Difference"—further redevelopment of package.

Flood Defences

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects authorisation to be given for a start to be made on a flood defence scheme for the Cliffe Cell in Lewes. [15695]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency consider that the Cliffe Cell in Lewes is unlikely to qualify for funding for at least the next three years as the assessed priority score for the scheme is below the currently indicated thresholds.

Farming

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many bankruptcies there have been among farmers in England in each of the last 10 years. [16488]

Jim Knight: The data requested on bankruptcies are set out in the table and are available only for England and Wales combined.

Number of bankruptcies in the agricultural and horticultural sectors: England and Wales 1995–2004

	Bankruptcies of self-employed individuals	*Company insolvencies*[1]	*Total*
1995	218	99	317
1996	168	89	257
1997	155	51	206
1998	157	65	222
1999	183	75	258
2000	173	67	240
2001	183	90	273
2002	132	76	208
2003	151	52	203
2004	204	35	239

[1] Including partnerships.
Source:
Department of Trade and Industry

Fishing Fleet

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will estimate the *(a)* size of the fishing fleet, *(b)* number of people directly involved in the (i) catching sector and (ii) processing sector and *(c)* the value and tonnage of landings for each nation of the UK. [14832]

Mr. Bradshaw: There were 7,030 sea fishing vessels registered in the UK fleet on 1 January 2005. In 2004, there were 11,559 full and part-time fishermen employed in the UK catching sector and 18,180 full time equivalent employees working in the sea fish processing industry. Landings into the UK by the UK fishing fleet totalled 461.5 thousand tonnes in 2004, with a value of £405.6 million. Available information for each nation of the UK is given in the following table.

Information for each nation of the UK for the year 2004 or as at the end of 2004

	England	*Wales*	*N. Ireland*	*Scotland*	*Total UK*
Number of UK sea fishing vessels at the end of year[1]	3,430	515	332	2,364	6,641
Number of full and part-time fishermen employed in the catching sector	4,504	1,161	619	5,275	11,559
Number of full time equivalents employed in the fish processing sector[2]	10,388	[2]	724	7,068	18,180
Landings by UK vessels of sea fish into each nation of the UK:					
Quantity ('000 tonnes)	99.2	11.3	13.8	337.2	461.5
Value (£ million)	120.4	10.4	14.3	260.5	405.6

[1] There are a further 389 vessels registered in the Isle of Man and Channel Islands.
[2] Separate estimates are not available for employment in the fish processing sector for Wales—these figures are included in the estimate given for England.

Fly-tipping (Bedfordshire)

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* incidents of fly-tipping were reported and *(b)* prosecutions were made as a result in (i) the county of Bedfordshire and (ii) the parliamentary constituency of mid-Bedfordshire in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [16613]

Mr. Bradshaw: No national data have previously been collected on incidents of illegal waste disposal or fly-tipping.

DEFRA has worked with the Environment Agency and the Local Government Association to develop Flycapture, a national fly-tipping database, which has been active since April 2004.

There were 6,283 fly-tipping incidents reported by the waste collection authorities in the county of Bedfordshire from April 2004 to March 2005.

Flycapture indicates that authorities are taking a wide range of enforcement action. Previously the 'actions taken' page of the database was not mandatory and therefore the picture is patchy. The Bedfordshire waste collection authorities reported 1,927 actions from April 2004 to March 2005, seven of which were prosecutions.

Mid-Bedfordshire district council reported 959 incidents from April 2004 to March 2005 and seven actions, none of which were prosecutions.

Foxes

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate has been made of the fox population in London for each year since 1997. [15568]

Jim Knight: We are not aware that an estimate has been made of the fox population in London for each year since 1997. A report issued by Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) in 1995[1] estimated the British urban fox population to be 33,000, but the total number of urban foxes has undoubtedly changed since then.

[1] Harris, S., Morris, P., Wray, S. and Yalden, D. (1995) A review of British mammals: population estimates and conservation status of British mammals other than cetaceans (Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough).

Fuel Poverty

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much has been spent on tackling fuel poverty in England and Wales in each year since 1997. [15134]

Mr. Morley: Fuel poverty is a devolved matter, and expenditure on fuel poverty in Wales is a matter for the Welsh Assembly Government. The major programme to tackle fuel poverty in the private sector in England is Warm Front. Since its launch in June 2000, annual expenditure on Warm Front in England is:

£ million

Scheme year	*Approximate total spend*
2000–01	72
2001–02	197
2002–03	163
2003–04	164
2004–05	166

The predecessor to the Warm Front scheme was the Home Energy Efficiency scheme. From June 1997 until May 2000, annual expenditure on the scheme was approximately £60 million.

Gangmasters

Jim Sheridan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the responsibilities of Operation Gangmaster will be transferred to the Gangmasters Licensing Authority established under the Gangmasters (Licensing) Act 2004. [15166]

Jim Knight: The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions is responsible for Operation Gangmaster. I can confirm that he has no plans to transfer the responsibility for Operation Gangmaster to the Gangmasters Licensing Authority. However, the Authority will be holding discussions with DWP to establish how intelligence gathered through Operation Gangmaster can be used for licensing and associated enforcement purposes.

Green Ministers

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what work her Department's Green Minister has undertaken in the last three months. [15675]

Jim Knight: Ben Bradshaw was appointed as Departmental Sustainable Development Minister in June 2005.

In July, the Minister attended a breakfast seminar for Sustainable Development Ministers to discuss the sustainable development strategy and Ministers' role in delivering it.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what meetings her Department's Green Minister has attended in the last 12 months in that capacity. [15676]

Jim Knight: Lord Whitty was Defra's Green Minister until April 2005 and in that capacity was a member of the Cabinet Sub-Committee of Green Ministers (ENV(G).

Ben Bradshaw was appointed as departmental Sustainable Development Minister in June 2005 and is a member of the new Ministerial Sub-Committee on Sustainable Development in Government (EE(SD)).

Although the Government publish the title, membership and terms of reference of cabinet committees, it has been the practice of successive Governments not to disclose details of their proceedings.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the meetings at which her Department has been represented about the delivery of sustainable development across Government as co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-committee of Green Ministers. [15677]

Mr. Morley: Following the general election in May, the Cabinet Sub-Committee of Green Ministers (ENV(G) was replaced by the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Sustainable Development in Government (EE(SD)) whose members are departmental Sustainable Development Ministers.

Although the Government publish the title, membership and terms of reference of cabinet committees, it has been the practice of successive Governments not to disclose details of their proceedings.

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, has also chaired a Sustainable Development Task Force whose agendas, minutes and papers can be found on the Government's sustainable development website.

In addition, officials in the Department have had many meetings with others across Government both to develop and implement the Governments new sustainable development strategy 'Securing the Future'.

Hazardous Waste

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her

estimate is of the additional cost to small and medium-sized enterprises in the UK of complying with the European hazardous waste regulations. [15527]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department has published a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) on the implementation of the Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2005 (SI No. 894/2005). Copies of the RIA are available in the House Library and on the internet at the following address. http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/em2005/uksiem_20050894—en.pdf.

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether small businesses in the UK are required to maintain a register of their disposal of electrical waste to comply with the hazardous waste regulations. [15528]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2005 (SI 894/2005) require all those producing hazardous waste to keep a register of consignment notes and any return from the consignee confirming receipt of the waste and the method of disposal or recovery. Some electrical waste will be non-hazardous and would not be subject to the requirements of the regulations.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance the Government have issued to waste producers on the implementation of the Hazardous Waste Regulations; and what guidance the Environment Agency is required to supply to waste producers. [15685]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra has published a leaflet on the requirements of the Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2005 which is targeted at small business producers of hazardous waste, but which is also useful for waste managers. Defra has also published specific policy guidance on the premises notification and the mixing requirements of the regulations. The leaflet and guidance have been distributed to stakeholders and they are also available on the web (http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/special/index.htm). Defra is preparing further specific guidance on provisions in the regulations relating to offences, emergencies and transitional provisions for waste management licensing and this will be available shortly.

It is normal practice for the Environment Agency to issue guidance on the operational aspects of relevant regulations, and they have issued a comprehensive raft of guidance relating to the Hazardous Waste Regulations covering the definition of hazardous waste, mixing hazardous waste, the process of premises notification, and the completion of consignment notes and formulation of consignment codes. The agency has also published frequently asked questions (FAQs) on hazardous waste issues and guidance on the management of specific waste streams including fluorescent tubes and cathode ray tubes. All of this is available on the agency's website at: www.environment-agency.gov.uk and the FAQs are also available on the Defra website listed above.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what consultation the Government conducted with waste producers in assessing the environmental benefits of the procedures included in the Hazardous Waste Regulations 2005. [15687]

Mr. Bradshaw: The procedures included in the Hazardous Waste Regulations 2005 were implemented to transpose the requirements of the European Commission's Directive on Hazardous Waste (91/689/EEC). The directive sets out requirements for the controlled management of hazardous waste with a view to protecting human health and the environment. Defra issued a consultation on the new regulations in July 2004. The draft regulatory impact assessment forming part of this consultation included an assessment of the environmental benefits.

Household Waste

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the total UK household waste in each year between 1997 and 2005; what percentage was *(a)* discarded packaging material waste and *(b)* other waste; and if she will make a statement. [16571]

Mr. Bradshaw: Results from the DEFRA Municipal Waste Management Survey, are listed as follows:

Household waste arisings, England

	Tonnes (Thousand)
1996–97	22,549
1997–98	23,333
1998–99	23,531
1999–2000	24,760
2000–01	25,079
2001–02	25,524
2002–03	25,832
2003–04	25,443

Information on the amount of packaging waste discarded by households each year is not available. However, analysis in from the PackFlow report recently published by Valpak estimated packaging waste in the household waste stream to be 4.54 million tonnes in England, equivalent in 2003–04 to about 18 per cent. of household waste arisings. The remaining 'other' household waste will amount to 82 per cent.

Continued progress with various recycling schemes has resulted a steady increase in household recycling rates, from 7.5 per cent. in 1996–97 to 17.7 per cent. in 2003–04. An increase in recycling of specific materials such as glass, paper and card, cans and plastics, from household sources, has been recorded over this period. Household packaging waste, although not specifically identified, would have been part of this increase.

Litter

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what advice her Department provides to local councils on the implementation of the Cleaner Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 about litter. [15931]

Mr. Bradshaw: Guidance has already been provided to local authorities on the measures in the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 which came into force in June. Further guidance will be issued

shortly on measures that are planned to come into force in October. We plan to commence most of the measures in the Act in April next year, and in October will be publishing a consultation document seeking the views of local authorities and others on draft regulations and guidance, with a view to finalising them in the new year.

We will also be providing advice and support to local councils and other land managers through a series of events and seminars on the Act.

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the annual tonnage of litter collected in England in 2004–05. [15932]

Mr. Bradshaw: Government does not collect statistics on the annual tonnage of litter collected in England. However, the impact of litter on the local environment is monitored through the Annual Local Environmental Quality Survey of England (LEQSE), conducted by ENCAMS (Environmental Campaigns) on behalf of Defra. Since the first survey in 2001–02 the proportion of unsatisfactory sites for litter and detritus has fallen from 28 per cent. to 22 per cent. Local authorities are also now required to provide information on litter levels through the introduction of the street cleansing best value performance indicator, BV199, which is based on the LEQSE methodology.

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the cost of removal of litter by local authorities in England in 2004–05. [15933]

Mr. Bradshaw: Data are collected by Government on the total expenditure of local authorities in England on street cleansing not chargeable to highways. The latest figure available is £538 million for 2003–04.

Olympic Games

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the former nuclear reactor site at the proposed 2012 Olympic Park last received an environmental assessment; and if she will make a statement. [15518]

Mr. Morley: I understand from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) that there was a nuclear reactor site at Queen Mary College, East London. Following the reactor's being taken out of use, an independent radiological survey was carried out under the auspices of HSE's Nuclear Installations Inspectorate in August 1983. As a result of this survey and an earlier one carried out by the college, waste was removed from the site and decontamination carried out. The site was then delicensed by HSE. In doing so, HSE were required, under the terms of the Nuclear Installations Act 1965, to be satisfied that there was no longer any residual danger from ionising radiation at the site. Queen Mary College's period of responsibility under the 1965 Act ended on 25 November 1983.

In 2003, environmental consultants for the London Development Agency undertook a major environmental assessment of the whole of the proposed Olympic Park site as part of the planning process. They assessed that the reactor's former presence do not and will not pose a risk to the Olympic Development. In particular this assessment was made as the facility is no longer in existence and has been safely decommissioned.

Petrol Vapour

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of vapour recovery systems in petrol stations. [15409]

Mr. Bradshaw: There are two types of petrol vapour recovery systems which can be fitted at petrol stations. Petrol Vapour Recovery stage I controls (PVR I) reduce emissions of petrol vapour during the delivery of petrol from road tankers to petrol stations; and stage II controls (PVR II) which reduce emissions of petrol vapour during the refuelling of vehicles.

PVR I is required at all UK petrol stations with sales above 500 cubic metres of petrol a year. The PVR I controls should prevent all petrol vapour from this source escaping to the atmosphere. Statutory guidance reflects the mandatory requirements relating to the technical standards systems must meet when installed. The guidance also specifies the maintenance regime which must be carried out to ensure PVR I systems continue to operate effectively. Local authorities carry out periodic inspections of petrol stations to ensure compliance with the requirements.

Research has shown that PVR II systems under laboratory conditions can reduce emissions of petrol vapour to air by around 85 per cent. We are considering whether to require some petrol stations to install PVR II equipment.

Private Finance Initiative

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 14 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 242–43W, on the private finance initiative, what total value of assets and liabilities for each of the listed private finance initiatives and public private partnerships is recorded on the Government balance sheet; what proportion of assets and liabilities is listed; what the accounting treatment is for assets and liabilities; and whether it is compatible with *(a)* generally-accepted accounting practices and *(b)* international financial reporting standards. [15958]

Jim Knight: Further to the answer of 14 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 242–43W, additional information is as follows:

(a) The PFI project undertaken by the core Department is to provide office facilities at Brooklands Avenue in Cambridge. No assets and liabilities for this project are recognised in the core Department's balance sheet. The accounting treatment is in line with the UK GAAP and IFRS requirements and is confirmed by the National Audit Office, the external auditor to the core Department. The notes to the accounts in the core Department's financial statements reflect the costs incurred and future commitments on the project.

(b) For the Broadland Norfolk Flood Defence and Pevensey Bay Sea Defences PFI schemes—shown against Environment Agency—no assets and liabilities

for these projects are recognised in the Environment Agency balance sheet. The accounting treatment accords with UK GAAP and IFRS requirements and is confirmed by the National Audit Office, external auditor to the Environment Agency. The notes to the accounts in the Environment Agency's financial statements reflect the costs incurred and future commitments on each scheme.

(c) No assets or liabilities in respect of the PFI project—SPIRIT IT System—shown against the Countryside Agency are recognised in the Agency's balance sheet. The accounting treatment accords with UK GAAP and IFRS requirements and is confirmed by the National Audit Office, external auditor to the Environment Agency. The notes to the accounts in the Countryside Agency's financial statements reflect the costs incurred and future commitments on the project.

(d) The four PPP schemes listed against British Waterways are classified by the Office for National Statistics as falling within the definition of a private sector company and as such fall outside British Waterways' balance sheet and hence Government's. Under these accounting arrangements, there are no liabilities and no recourse to Government Only the value of British Waterways' investment in each venture is accounted for in its balance sheet. The amounts currently invested are:

Waterside Pub Partnership: £500,000

Isis regeneration partnership: £10,750,000

Wood Wharf Partnership: £86,000

Watergrid: £0 (dormant)

The accounting treatment is in accordance with UK GAAP and is reviewed annually by PricewaterhouseCoopers, British Waterways' auditors.

Recycling

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much funding *(a)* councils in England, *(b)* Birmingham and *(c)* Solihull have received to support recycling in each year since 1997. [15192]

Mr. Bradshaw: The main source of funding for local authorities' waste management services is the Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services (EPCS) block of annual Government grant. It is for the local authorities to decide what proportion of the block is invested in waste management services, including recycling.

Funding is also being provided from a variety of other sources to help authorities improve recycling rates. The Waste Minimisation and Recycling (Challenge) Fund has made available funding totalling £275 million over the four years from 2002–03 to 2005–06 for specific projects to expand recycling operations.

Through the Private Finance Initiative (PFI), credits worth £355 million have been made available over the same period as an extra source of funding, with a further £535 million available in 2006–07 and 2007–08.

In January 2004 my hon. Friend, the Minister of State for Climate Change and the Environment, Elliot Morley, announced that a further £20 million would be given to local authorities with responsibility for waste in England to reduce spending pressures in 2004–05.

In December 2004 the Government announced a targeted local authority Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant totalling £260 million over the three years between 2005–06 and 2007–08. A full list of allocations to each authority in England in 2005–06 is available on the DEFRA website. Authorities will receive further allocations in 2006–07 and 2007–08.

The amounts received by Birmingham city council and Solihull metropolitan borough council to support recycling are shown in the following table:

£

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Birmingham city council				
National Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund	347,384	—	—	—
Grant to relieve spending pressures in the waste area	—	—	281,600	—
Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant	—	—	—	807,196
Solihull metropolitan borough council				
National Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund	205,000	—	—	—
Grant to relieve spending pressures in the waste area	—	—	55,120	—
Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant	—	—	—	158,033

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* schools and *(b)* LEAs run recycling programmes for (i) cans, (ii) glass and (iii) paper. [16045]

Mr. Bradshaw: The information requested is not held centrally.

Oceans

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effects of increased acidity on ocean chemistry and biology. [15374]

Mr. Bradshaw: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1964W.

Sewage

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action has been taken to stop untreated sewage overflowing into the Thames since August 2004. [15867]

Mr. Morley: Since August 2004 various actions have been put in hand, as follows, in relation to the sewage collection system and treatment works, to reduce the frequency or impact of the overflows that operate during some wet weather conditions, to prevent flooding and the overloading of sewage treatment plants:

by April 2005 most of the overflows from the Abbey Mills pumping station, the main source of untreated sewage, received screening prior to discharge;

since April 2005 Thames Water have been working up proposals for significant treatment and capacity improvements at Beckton, Crossness and Mogden sewage treatment works.

In addition, the Thames Tideway Strategic Study, which was set up to identify problems caused by intermittent storm sewage discharges and to propose potential solutions having regard to costs and benefits, has continued its work. Ministers and the Office of Water Services (Ofwat) await a report on further investigations by the study group concerning aspects of the long-term proposal for a 35km tunnel under the Thames, and potential smaller-scale measures that could deliver earlier improvements.

Ofwat are also expecting a report in early October from an additional study they commissioned into possible partial solutions.

These reports will be considered with a view to determining what further measures are appropriate to deal with overflows from the collecting system.

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the location of sewage overflow pipes that flow into the Thames. [15873]

Mr. Morley: The following list sets out the names of the 57 combined sewer overflows (from west to east) that discharge to the tidal Thames. These only discharge in storm conditions. I have arranged for a map to be deposited in the House Libraries that identifies their locations.

Acton
Stamford Brook
West Putney
Brook Green
North West Relief
Hammersmith Pumping Station
Putney Bridge
Frogmore
Jews Row
Falcon Brook Relief
Falcon Brook Pumping Station
Lots Road Pumping Station
Church Street
Queen Street
Smith Street
Ranelagh
Western Pumping Station
South West Relief
Heathwall Pumping Station
Kings Scholar Pond
Clapham
Brixton
Grosvenor
Horseferry
Wood Street
Regent Street
Northumberland Street
Savoy Street
Norfolk Street
Essex Street
Fleet
Goswell Street
Pauls Pier
London Bridge
Shad Thames Pumping Station
Battle Bridge
Beer Lane
Iron Gate
Nightingale
Union Wharf
Wapping Dock
Cole Stairs
Bell Wharf
North East Relief
Ratcliffe
Earl Pumping Station
Holloway
Blackwall Sewer
Deptford
Wick Lane
Greenwich Pumping Station
Isle of Dogs Pumping Station
Abbey Mills
Canning Town Pumping Station
Charlton
Henley Road
Store Road

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the volume of sewage discharges from each sewage treatment works in north west London was in each of the last 10 years. [16230]

Mr. Morley: There are no sewage treatment works in north west London.

The works that treat sewage from north west London are Mogden—in west London, and Beckton—in east London. However, they do not serve north west London exclusively, and it is not possible to provide a breakdown of the volume of their discharges which derive from north west London.

Scrapie

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will ask the European Commission to bring forward proposals to scrap the existing EU law regarding surveillance policy for goats; how many *(a)* goats and *(b)* sheep have been diagnosed with scrapie in each of the last three years; and how many have been destroyed. [14424]

Mr. Bradshaw: The European Commission's TSE Roadmap of 15 July confirms that the current extended monitoring of goats will be reviewed in the second half of 2005 after more results are available. Monitoring was increased to provide a better estimate of BSE in goats in order to assess whether the positive BSE case slaughtered in France in 2002 was an isolated case. A possible UK case of BSE in a goat that died in 1990 is also under investigation.

The number of goats and sheep that have been diagnosed with scrapie in each of the last three years in Great Britain is set out as follows.

Passive surveillance (i.e. field reports based on clinical signs)

Year reported	*Goats*	*Sheep*
2002	1	403
2003	0	377
2004	0	309
2005[1]	0	66

Active surveillance (i.e. abattoir/fallen stock surveys)

Year reported	*Goats*	*Sheep*
2002	0	24
2003	1	62
2004	0	24
2005[1]	0	15

[1] January to June.

Source:
Scrapie Notifications Database (SND)

As at end July 2005, three goats and 66,700 sheep have been destroyed under the Compulsory Scrapie Flocks Scheme in herds/flocks with confirmed cases of scrapie.

Shopping Bags

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the number of free plastic shopping bags given away in England between 1997 and 2005; and if she will make a statement. [16570]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department's current estimate for the number of plastic bags given away in England between these dates is 66.8 billion bags. This estimate is based around a figure of 10 billion per annum for UK carrier bag usage, contained within a consultant's report for WRAP in 2005. This figure was cited by in the Scottish Executive's Extended Impact Assessment for the plastic bag levy bill. The figure for England per annum is generated by calculating the proportion of the UK population that live in England (currently 83.5 per cent.) and adjusting the UK figure accordingly. In calculating this figure over several years it has to be assumed that the figures have been constant since 1997 as we do not hold any data relating to the fluctuations in usage over this period.

Sustainable Development

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what parts of her Department's estate will not be covered by the commitments set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. [15674]

Jim Knight: Framework commitments are directly applicable to the core Department and its seven Executive Agencies—Central Science Laboratory, Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science, Pesticides Safety Directorate, Rural Payments Agency, State Veterinary Service, Veterinary Laboratory Agency, Veterinary Medicines Directorate.

Our aim is for as much as possible of the estate to be covered by the Framework commitments. This means that different approaches may be appropriate for each part of the Framework.

Environmental Management Systems are in place or are being introduced at Defra sites except where there are plans for disposal, where we are a minor occupier sharing with another Department, or where there are very few staff.

Waste targets have until recently applied only to sites where Defra is the major or sole occupier and there are more than 50 staff. This has now been extended to cover sites with more than 25 staff.

The entire Defra estate is covered by Framework commitments on travel, energy, water, biodiversity, procurement, estate management and social impacts.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to provide the delivery of sustainable development within government; and what progress has been made on her Department's Sustainable Development Strategy. [15678]

Mr. Morley: Defra has a public service agreement target to promote sustainable development across Government. The launch of the UK Government's sustainable development strategy in March 2005 has helped to define clearly the shared priorities for action that need to be developed over the conning years.

From 2006, a strengthened Sustainable Development Commission will act as advocate, adviser and watchdog for sustainable development.

The strategy includes a specific commitment for Government bodies to produce sustainable development action plans. These will define the specific contributions Departments will make towards delivery of the strategy. A senior level officials sustainable development programme board has been created to oversee delivery of the strategy and progress on the priority areas.

Defra's overarching aim is sustainable development and the Department's five-year strategy published in December 2004 tackles 'Putting sustainable development into practice'. Progress against the Department's five-year plan is reported in the Department's annual report.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what she has identified as the most significant sustainable development impacts in relation to the operation of her Department's estate; and what steps have been taken to review arrangements for public reporting of such impacts. [15679]

Jim Knight: The most significant negative impacts have been identified as:

Environmental—Use of land and associated landfill impacts (such as leachate and methane gas production) from waste disposal; use of non-renewable resources; contributions to global warming due to utility use and project management practices; contributions to ground level ozone and greenhouse effects from the use of refrigerants and materials during maintenance of buildings; land take for the development of new properties; atmospheric emissions contributing to global warming associated with business travel, fleet cars and staff commuting.

Social—Impact of landfill on local community from leachate and methane gas production, noise and visual impacts; local and global health impacts associated with air emissions, global warming and volatile organic compounds (VOCs); health, safety and welfare impacts of work practices and procedures.

The most significant positive impacts have been identified as:

Environmental—Reduced air emissions from effective green travel and transport planning; protection of biodiversity through land and ground management; reduced need for landfill and associate emissions due to increased recycling and recovery of materials; reduced use of non-renewable resources through appropriate procurement specification and management.

Social—Reduced health, noise and visual impacts from waste disposal due to increased recycling and recovery of materials; improved staff welfare and health benefits from effective green travel planning.

Economic—Local job creation and improvements to local transport provision resulting from office location, relocation and co-location projects.

To date, we have reported on these impacts on a public internet site http://defraweb/corporate/sdstrategy/operations/index.htm. We continually seek to improve presentation, topicality and transparency of public reporting on our operational impacts.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what arrangements her Department has in place to report publicly on its key sustainable development impacts. [15680]

Mr. Morley: Sustainable development is Defra's overarching aim and, as such, the Department's annual report gives details of its key sustainable development impacts. In addition, Defra will be publishing a sustainable development action plan in December 2005 detailing the Department's key actions in 2006. The action plan will be reported on annually.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on what action relating to sustainable development is *(a)* required and *(b)* undertaken by her Department's (i) executive agencies, (ii) advisory non-departmental bodies, (iii) executive non-departmental bodies, (iv) tribunals, (v) public corporations and (vi) other bodies. [15730]

Mr. Morley: All these bodies have commitments in the UK Government's sustainable development strategy and are required to deliver these commitments, while applying the sustainable development principles in the strategy. In December 2005, Defra and it's executive agencies will be publishing sustainable development action plans giving details of key sustainable development actions they will be delivering in 2006. Further information on other bodies could be gathered only at disproportionate cost.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment is made *(a)* of the environmental impact and *(b)* against sustainable development criteria of the bids made for contracts awarded by her Department; who makes such assessments; and whether such assessments are published. [15731]

Mr. Morley: From 1 November 2003, all central Government Departments must apply the minimum environmental standards when buying certain categories of products and commodities. All Departments are required to submit a Sustainable Development in Government Questionnaire annually to Defra's Sustainable Development Unit.

The Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate sets out the cross-Government strategy for managing the Government estate in a way which contributes fully to the sustainable development agenda. See www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/sdig/improving/index.htm.

Under Part F of the Framework, all Government Departments are required to implement the following targets:

F1: Have a sustainable procurement strategy in place by 1 December 2005;

F2: Have environmental clauses included within contracts;

F3: Have sustainable procurement training developed and implemented.

Currently, Defra procurement policy is to award contracts against the most economically advantageous tender criterion, having regard to the eligibility, economic and financial standing, ability, capability and technical capacity of the supplier to deliver the best whole life cost solution. Defra's policy on disclosure of documentation pertaining to commercial contracting is governed by the Freedom of Information Act. Requests for disclosure are considered on their merits relative to the nature of each specific request.

In addition to this overarching policy, Defra considers environmental and sustainability factors under its sustainable operations strategy including its acquisition and use of energy, water, waste and recycling, biodiversity, travel, paper, office stationery, office furniture, office equipment, and facilities management. The Department applies UK timber procurement policy and is utilising the public sector catering services toolkit that it has developed in conjunction with other Government Departments.

As part of the sustainable procurement strategy required under Part F of the Framework, Defra will develop a sustainable procurement impact assessment tool (SPIAT) for use across Defra's commercial contracting portfolio.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of electricity used by buildings in *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its agencies came from renewable sources in each year since 1997. [15848]

Jim Knight: The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs was created on 8 June 2001.

The proportion of electricity used in buildings for which Defra and its agencies has a contractual responsibility that came from renewable sources was:

Percentage

	(a) Defra	*(b) Defra agencies*
2001–02	22	17
2002–03	45	38
2003–04	77	40
2004–05	83	48

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the annual spending by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its agencies was on (i) electricity and (ii) on water and sewerage services in each year since 1997. [15849]

Jim Knight: The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs was created on 8 June 2001.

The annual spending on *(a)* electricity and *(b)* water and sewerage services for buildings at which Defra and its agencies have contractual responsibility was as follows:

£

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
(a) Defra				
Electricity	1,062,688	920,830	978,977	1,095,395
Water and sewerage	181,066	151,170	138,714	137,397
(b) Executive agencies				
Electricity	1,229,560	1,662,247	1,382,569	1,684,433
Water and sewerage	420,942	459,421	464,050	375,579

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what change there has been in water consumption by her Department between 2002 and 31 March 2005. [15850]

Jim Knight: Water consumption at Defra and executive agency sites where Defra has contractual liability for water was as follows:

	Water consumption
2002–03	417,343m^3
2004–05	328,564m^3

This is a reduction of 21 per cent.

To put this into the wider context of structural changes within the Department, consumption in the office-based estate has reduced from 7.98m^3 per person per year to 6.79m^3 during the period.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs at which non-office sites on her Department's estate she has identified opportunities for significant water savings. [15851]

Jim Knight: The majority of non-office sites on the Defra estate are scientific or research establishments. Standard water benchmarking practices do not apply to their working practices, but site specific targets have been developed in collaboration with the Watermark project team, and water use at these sites is regularly monitored and analysed to identify potential savings.

During 2004–05 works were carried out at the Veterinary Laboratories Agency to improve the steam/condensation mains system to improve water efficiency.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of copying paper used by her Department in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [15854]

Jim Knight: For the two financial years in question, the percentages for printed publications are 100 per cent. and 100 per cent. for each year respectively; against the criteria of uncoated paper containing 100 per cent. recycled fibre and coated paper containing not less than 75 per cent. recycled fibre. For copying paper the percentages are 70 per cent. and 82.8 per cent. for each year respectively of which the content for each is 100 per cent. recycled fibre. The Department has amended its electronic catalogues to prevent acquisition of all virgin tinted papers.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of paper for printed publications used by the Department in 2003–04 and 2004–05 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [15855]

Jim Knight: For the two financial years in question, the percentages for printed publications printed through Defra's single central business unit are 100 per cent. and 100 per cent. for each year respectively; against the criteria of uncoated paper containing 100 per cent. recycled fibre and coated paper containing not less than 75 per cent. recycled fibre.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures she has put in place to ensure that her Department meets the targets to ensure that all copying paper brought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content. [15856]

Mr. Morley: The Department has met the target.

All copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures she has put in place to ensure that her Department meets the targets set by the Department to ensure that all paper for printed publications brought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [15857]

Jim Knight: The Sustainable Development in Government Report shows that Defra met the quick win target for paper for printed publications. This

achievement owes much to the fact that most of Defra's printed publications are commissioned from a single central business unit using a central contract for recycled paper.

This Department partnering ODPM and DfT in a collaborative procurement, promoted by OGC to other Government Departments as well as the wider public sector, established the contract. The contract was for the supply of a suite of recycled papers that met the published recycled standards, as well as evaluating the environmental credentials of the production process.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department has joined the Watermark project. [15858]

Jim Knight: Yes. Defra joined the Watermark project in September 2001. In September 2002, additional sites were included on the project. The majority of Defra office sites are now covered by the Watermark project.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs by what date her Department expects to implement in full the quick win targets to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper brought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications brought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [15859]

Jim Knight: The date for implementation of this quick win target is October 2005. Defra already meets the target for copying paper. For printed publications, all printed material sourced through Defra's communications directorate meets the requirements identified.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list her Department's main suppliers of (i) copier paper, (ii) stationery, (iii) envelopes and (iv) paper for reports; in each case stating *(a)* the name of each paper used and *(b)* the recycled (and post-consumer recycled) content of each paper. [15860]

Jim Knight: The Department's main suppliers for (i) are Banner Business Suppliers, The Paper Company and Premier Paper; for (ii) are Banner Business Supplies, Office Depot; for (iii) is Banner Business Supplies; for (iv) are Robert Home Paper, Howard Smith Paper, James McNaughton, Premier Paper.

The name of the white copier paper is Evolve which is 100 per cent. recycled fibre. For paper for reports, all papers meet the Defra criteria of uncoated paper containing 100 per cent. recycled fibre and coated paper containing not less than 75 per cent. recycled fibre.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the role is of the Sustainable Development Commission; how and by whom its members are appointed; what the scientific credentials are of each of its members; and which of its members are known to have existing or past affiliations to green political organisations. [15514]

Mr. Morley: The Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) is the principal Government adviser on sustainable development, reporting to the Prime Minister and to the leaders of the devolved administrations.

The SDC's current remit is to advocate sustainable development across all sectors of the UK, particularly within Government (including the devolved administrations) and build consensus on the actions needed if further progress is to be achieved.

However, this remit is under revision following a commitment in the UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy (Securing the future) to strengthen the SDC and expand its role to act as an independent 'watchdog' looking at Government's progress on the strategy.

Members to the SDC are appointed by the Prime Minister and leaders of the devolved administrations. Appointments are made in accordance with the Commissioner for Public Appointments Code of Practice, and the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA) principles of merit and equal opportunities, with independent assessment, openness and transparency of process.

The work of the commission is very wide-ranging, and commissioners are sought from a range of backgrounds to lead on specific areas of the commission's work, e.g. business, education, or energy and transport. During the selection process, candidates are assessed by merit against the advertised criteria, which focuses on demonstration of experience, not on formal qualifications. Therefore, details of specific scientific credentials of SDC commissioners are not held, but biographies of all commissioners are on the SDC's website: http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/pages/about_us/commissioners.html

Full details of the Sustainable Development Commissioners interests are available on the SDC's website at www.sd-commission.org.uk

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her answer of 20 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1765W, on the Sustainable Procurement Task Force, what role the taskforce has in assessing the impact on sustainability of implementation of recommendations from the Gershon Review. [15169]

Mr. Morley: Through its Working Groups, the Sustainable Procurement Task Force is gathering evidence from both the public and private sectors on the extent to which public procurement is able to achieve efficiency gains as envisaged by the Gershon Review, while also meeting sustainable development objectives.

The taskforce will make recommendations on these and other findings in the National Action Plan for Sustainable Procurement, to be submitted to Ministers in April 2006.

Taxis

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 5 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 255W, on taxis, what estimate she has made of the cost of providing the information requested. [12696]

Jim Knight: The estimated cost of an exercise to examine all the Department's expenses claims of the last five years and extract the costs of taxis is £140,000.

Timber

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department's procurement policy includes timber used on and in the construction of departmental building projects; and if she will make a statement. [15726]

Mr. Morley: Defra seeks to purchase the timber used on and in its projects for building works from legal and sustainable sources. This policy applies equally to timber used for temporary site works and timber incorporated into the fabric of buildings or retained for Defra's use.

Procurement centres in Defra and its executive agencies have been issued with guidance, including a model specification clause and contract condition, which explains how to seek to acquire timber and wood products from legal and sustainable sources. Building site supervisors are instructed to monitor compliance with these contract requirements.

Defra's Estates Division is responsible for all major works and estate management on the Defra estate and that of the Pesticides Safety Directorate, the Rural Payments Agency, the State Veterinary Service, the Veterinary Laboratories Agency and the Veterinary Medicines Directorate. Adherence to the timber policy for the Department and these executive agencies falls to this central body of staff, which is fully appraised of the timber purchase policy.

The Central Science Laboratory and Centre for Environmental Fisheries and Aquaculture are responsible for their own buildings and maintenance. They have also been made aware of the policy and have systems in place to ensure observance.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list her Department's refurbishment projects that *(a)* are in progress and *(b)* will start in the next six months; what action is being taken to ensure that these will procure timber from legal and sustainable sources; and if she will issue guidance to contractors on each of these projects to ensure that the timber used on site during refurbishment also comes from legal and sustainable sources. [15727]

Jim Knight: The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and its executive agencies are *(a)* undertaking, or *(b)* proposing to undertake within the next six months, the following refurbishment projects valued at over £100,000.

(a) Offices, Nobel House, London

Offices, Ashdown House, London

(b) Offices, Eastbury House, London

Procurement centres in Defra and its executive agencies have been issued with guidance, including a model specification clause and contract condition, which explains to contractors how to seek to acquire timber and wood products from legal and sustainable sources. Contractors for the projects listed are required to supply timber from legal and sustainable sources. Building site supervisors are instructed to monitor compliance with these contract requirements.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans her Department has to fund the maintenance of the central point of expertise on timber. [15728]

Mr. Morley: The question asks various Government Ministers what plans they have to fund the maintenance of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber (CPET). CPET is the responsibility of the Department and so I am replying on behalf of the Government.

Defra has made an agreement with consultants ProForest to begin operating the CPET helpline and other services that will help UK public sector bodies and their suppliers to purchase their timber from legal and sustainable sources. It is possible that Defra will be able to meet the full cost of operating CPET from within its own financial resources. We will be able to forecast this more accurately in the light of the demands made on the CPET over the coming months. As a contingency measure Defra would be able to call on contributions agreed with some other Government Departments to help with any shortfall during the first three years of operation.

US Warship Disposal

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the Hartlepool-based ghost ships. [15682]

Mr. Bradshaw: The future of the four US ships at Teesside is primarily a matter for the US Marine Administration, as owners of the vessels, and Able UK, who are seeking the necessary permissions for dismantling the vessels at their Teesside facility.

The four US ships are currently docked in Able UK's Graythorp dock on Teesside. Able UK submitted applications for planning permission in January 2005. These applications, which include proposals for the construction and refurbishment of quays, the construction of a cofferdam and new dock gates, are being determined by the relevant planning authority, Hartlepool borough council. The council is currently waiting for Able UK to resubmit the environment statement in support of their applications before they determine the application. Able UK made an application for a waste management licence to the Environment Agency in February 2005. This application also cannot be determined until Able UK's environment statement is completed.

In the meantime, dismantling work is prevented by a condition in the existing waste management licence. The dock facility itself is subject to regular inspection by the Environment Agency in liaison with the Health and Safety Executive. Environmental monitoring indicates that storage of the four US naval ships at Able UK's Graythorp dock has not had a detrimental impact on the environment.

Video Conferencing

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many video conferencing units are installed in her Department and

in each agency of the Department; what percentage of offices have these facilities in each case; and what plans there are to increase the number. [15853]

Jim Knight: The number of videoconferencing units installed in Defra and associated agencies is as follows:

Defra:

24 units amounting to 26 per cent. of total offices (NB—units are installed in all medium to large offices).

There are plans to install additional units in Whitehall Place and York.

Rural Payments Agency:

Seven units amounting to 63 per cent. of total sites.

State Veterinary Services:

18 units amounting to 30 per cent. of all sites

Veterinary Laboratories Agency:

16 units at 14 sites amounting to 100 per cent. of all sites.

Veterinary Medicines Directorate:

One unit at one site amounting to 100 per cent. of all sites.

Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science:

Four units at four sites amounting to 100 per cent. of all sites.

Central Science Laboratory:

One unit at one site amounting to 100 per cent. of all sites.

Pesticides Safety Directorate:

0 units. NB—staff at the main PSD office at York makes use of the Defra videoconferencing unit in the adjacent building.

Water (Charges/Leakage)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make it her policy to provide financial assistance to people on low incomes in Essex to pay their water charges. [15576]

Mr. Morley: The Government takes the issue of water affordability very seriously but believes that solutions must be explored from a national, rather than a regional, perspective. A steering group was set up last year to look into water affordability issues. The Steering Group reported to Ministers in autumn 2004 and the Government's report into affordability was published in December 2004.

Financial support for families and for pensioners on low and moderate incomes has risen significantly in recent years. The Government will press on with its policy of promoting fairness and using changes to the tax and benefit system to tackle poverty but is not minded to introduce an explicit linkage between the tax and benefit system and water charges.

The Government have already taken action, through legislation, to provide protection in the form of a capped bill for vulnerable, low income groups in receipt of a metered supply who might otherwise cut back on water that they could not afford.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 4 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 13W, on water leaks, if she will meet Thames Water to discuss steps to reduce the rate of increase in water leakage across the company's area of supply. [15827]

Mr. Morley: Thames Water have taken steps to reduce the rate of leakage across its area of supply. During 2004–05 the company reduced overall leakage for the first time since 1999–2000. However, they still failed to meet their overall leakage target of 905 Megalitres/day by 10 Megalitres/day (1.1 per cent.). Reported leakage was 915 Megalitres/day in 2004–05.

Despite not meeting their overall target, the leakage targets were met in the area outside of London and in South London. It is the North London area where Thames Water continues to have real problems with the control of leakage and this area remains the main challenge.

Ofwat continue to require Thames Water to provide quarterly reports on the progress the company is making with its plan, agreed with the regulator, to restore leakage to its target level and achieve adequate security of supplies. These reports indicate that they are continuing to reduce leakage in line with their current targets. Ofwat has set Thames Water the target of reducing leakage to 725MI/d by 2009–10.

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, and Ministers are kept informed of water company performance on leakage and have raised concerns over Thames Water's previous performance on leakage. The Secretary of State has no plans to meet with Thames Water to discuss leakage while the company continues to make progress in line with targets.

PRIME MINISTER

Afghanistan

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Prime Minister what recent discussions he has had with the President of Afghanistan on the illegal drug trade. [15506]

The Prime Minister: I met President Karzai on 19 July, and we discussed a range of issues including counter-narcotics work. I also refer my hon. Friend to the 'Joint declaration of an enduring relationship between the UK and Afghanistan'. This is available on the No. 10 website.

Aviation and Aircraft Fuel

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Prime Minister whether he raised with his colleagues in the G8 taxation of aviation and aircraft fuel. [14170]

The Prime Minister: At this year's summit, my G8 colleagues and I focused on addressing the challenges of African development and global climate change. On Africa, we agreed a set of measures to help Africa overcome the huge challenges it faces. This included a doubling of aid to the continent by 2010. In helping to achieve this, a group of the G8 countries agreed to continue to consider innovative forms of finance, such as the International Finance Facility and a levy on plane tickets. A working group will consider the implementation of these.

The G8 leaders also agreed to act with urgency to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They agreed an action plan to help do this. One part of this wide-ranging plan is a programme of work to examine urgently the impact

that aviation is having on the climate, and the scope for technological and operational solutions. We welcome the European Commission's announcement that it supports the inclusion of the aviation emissions in the EU Emissions Trading Scheme.

Climate Change

Colin Challen: To ask the Prime Minister what steps he plans to take to ensure that *(a)* hon. Members and *(b)* representatives of civil society are able to participate in the continuing dialogue on climate change referred to in his statement at the G8. [12836]

The Prime Minister: Climate change is the most important long-term challenge that the world faces. That means involving every section of society in action to tackle it. Throughout our G8 presidency we have held a number of events on climate change science and the first ever meeting of G8 environment and energy Ministers. I have held regular meetings with representatives of various environmental organisations and business leaders. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has also engaged with Members from both Houses, as well as other G8 countries, and emerging economy countries. We shall continue this dialogue.

We shall continue to engage with civil society and parliamentarians in the future. This will be fed in to the dialogue between the G8 and the rapidly growing economies including China and India which was agreed by the G8 leaders at Gleneagles and which will commence with a meeting in London this November.

Consultants

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list management consultants employed by his Office in each of the last three years. [14358]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my Office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to him on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, columns 2241–42W by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (John Hutton).

Correspondence

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Prime Minister what his Office's policy is for dealing with and responding to correspondence received in *(a)* Welsh, *(b)* Scots Gaelic and *(c)* Irish Gaelic. [14730]

The Prime Minister: My office has arrangements with the FCO to translate letters received in languages other than English.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Prime Minister how many staff were employed by his Office on *(a)* 1 May 2004 and *(b)* 1 May 2005. [14511]

The Prime Minister: The total number of staff on the No. 10 payroll at the end of each of the financial years referred to is set out as follows.

Departmental staff

Date	*Number of staff*
1 April 2004	214
1 April 2005	226

Equality and Diversity

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Prime Minister how much his office has spent promoting equality and diversity in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [14660]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I have therefore asked my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster to reply. A copy of the reply will be placed in the Library of the House.

Freedom of Information

Pete Wishart: To ask the Prime Minister how many Freedom of Information Act 2000 requests have been answered by his Office; and in how many cases *(a)* information was wholly exempted, *(b)* information was partly exempted and *(c)* the requests were answered in full. [14958]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my Office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2248W by my right hon. Friend the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Harriet Harman).

Intelligence and Security Committee

Lynne Jones: To ask the Prime Minister what criteria are used to appoint members of the Intelligence and Security Committee. [16395]

The Prime Minister: The criteria for appointing the Intelligence and Security Committee are set out in Section 10 of the Intelligence Services Act 1994. I appoint the Chairman and other members of the Intelligence and Security Committee after consultation with the leaders of the main opposition parties. Membership of the Committee must be drawn from both Houses and cannot include a Minister of the Crown.

Management Consultants

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Prime Minister what the total expenditure saved was in each of the last three years in his Department as a result of implementing recommendations by management consultancies. [13571]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to him by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster today.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the five management consultancies which received the highest value of contracts awarded by his Department in each of the last three years and the total value of the contracts awarded to each. [13573]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to him by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2241W.

Media Relations

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Prime Minister how much his Office has spent on external media relations in each of the last 12 months. [14677]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my Office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 11 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 855W by my right hon. Friend the then Minister for the Cabinet Office (Ruth Kelly).

Muslim Faith (Meetings)

Mr. Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Prime Minister what the outcome was of his meeting with Muslim faith representatives on Tuesday 19 July. [14712]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to my opening remarks at the press conference I held with President Karzai and to the press briefing given by my official spokesman on Tuesday 19 July. Transcripts of each are available on the No. 10 website.

Opinion Surveys

Mr. Weir: To ask the Prime Minister what the *(a)* subject matter and *(b)* dates were of opinion survey research undertaken by his Office in the last 12 months; if he will place copies of the results of each survey in the Library; which companies were used in conducting the research; and how much each was paid. [14819]

The Prime Minister: My Office has conducted no opinion survey research in the past 12 months.

Royal Prerogative

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list each occasion when he has exercised the Royal Prerogative since 1997. [16357]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland (Alistair Carmichael) on 25 June 2002, *Official Report*, column 802W.

State-owned Ministerial Quarters

Mike Penning: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list alterations made to state-owned ministerial quarters funded from public funds since 1 May 1997. [16057]

The Prime Minister: Information relating to alterations made to Ministers official residences is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Telephone Inquiries

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Prime Minister what facilities his Office has to deal with telephone inquiries in *(a)* Welsh, *(b)* Scots Gaelic and *(c)* Irish Gaelic. [14731]

The Prime Minister: My office has no specific facilities, but would enlist the help of other Government Departments where possible.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Identity Cards

15. **Sandra Gidley:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the estimated cost of identity cards. [16791]

Andy Burnham: The unit cost of issuing together a combined passport and identity card package, valid for 10 years, is estimated as £93. This includes the cost of issuing biometric passports which amounts to around 70 per cent. of the total and which we will have to do to keep our passports secure.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 28 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1242W, to the hon. Member for Nottingham, South (Alan Simpson) on identity cards, whether the radio frequency identification technologies undergoing feasibility studies for biometric passports and identity cards include *(a)* read only tags, *(b)* read write tags and *(c)* both. [9551]

Andy Burnham *[holding answer 5 July 2005]:* The identity cards programme is not investigating the use of radio frequency identification for tagging. We are considering the use of 'contactless chips', which contain radio frequency chips. We will ensure that sensitive data on the chip is encrypted and are aiming to do this through adoption of emerging International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) standards. These provide significantly more security of data than exists today.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of privacy-enhancing technologies in the context of the UK identity cards system. [10988]

Mr. Charles Clarke: As part of specifying technical requirements for the identity card scheme, research into methods and technologies that seek to protect the privacy of citizen's data has been conducted and will be used to evaluate proposals received once procurement commences.

In general, we have examined the use of strong encryption technologies and digital signatures to protect the privacy of any sensitive information held on the card and to authenticate the information.

In addition, the National Identity Register (NIR) will be held in secure facilities within an appropriate security infrastructure to protect the information held. All communication links with the NIR will be encrypted.

Working processes within such facilities will need to comply with industry best practices, including segregation of operator role, robust accounting and audit processes.

In line with Office of Government Commerce guidelines, due to commercial sensitivity, it would not be appropriate to release further information in advance of procurement as it may prejudice these negotiations.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what alternative technical architectures his Department has considered for the identity cards scheme. [10989]

Mr. Charles Clarke: As part of setting technical requirements for the Identity Cards Scheme, we have undertaken research into potential architectures and this work will be used to inform our evaluation of proposals received once procurement commences.

However, ultimately, potential bidders will propose alternative solutions for the technical architecture of the National Identity Register (NIR), based on the technical requirements outlined by the Scheme. Hence, the detailed technical architecture of the NIR will not be finalised until the final stages of procurement negotiations.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what advice his Department has received from chief information officers of other Government Departments and agencies on the identity cards scheme, with particular reference *(a)* to (i) NHS Connecting for Health, (ii) the Department for Work and Pensions, (iii) HM Revenue and Customs, (iv) the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and (v) the UK Passports Agency and *(b)* to the (A) costs and (B) feasibility of the project. [10998]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Identity Cards Programme Team has regular and wide ranging discussions across Government in relation to different aspects of the scheme, including the organisations listed in the question. These discussions have informed the contents of the Regulatory Impact Assessment, which was published on 25 May 2005, and the Identity Cards Scheme Benefits Overview, which was published on 28 June 2005.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how he expects the identity card system to help to reduce the number of illegal immigrants residing in the UK. [12562]

Andy Burnham: Once individuals routinely present their ID cards in order to receive education, benefits and non-emergency health care or to gain legal employment then it will be more difficult for those here illegally to access these services or to find work. This is likely in turn to reduce the pull factors that encourage individuals to illegally enter or remain in the UK.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of times the identity card database would be used in order to secure the effective and efficient delivery of public services; and whether the consent of the individual cardholder would be required. [14547]

Andy Burnham: Currently, the identity cards programme is continuing to work with public service providers to gather their requirements as potential user organisations of the identity cards scheme. However, the number of occasions that a person will be asked to verify their identity against the National Identity Register will be a decision for the user organisation themselves. This is likely to be dependent on a number of factors, including the nature of their relationship with the individual (e.g. first time interaction, maintenance of details, transactional relationship) and their own business processes.

As such, it is not possible to provide a final estimate for the number of times the Register will be used to verify the identity of an individual in order to secure the effective and efficient provision of public services until further work is completed.

However, in such circumstances, the consent of the individual would always be necessary unless verification was undertaken either under the powers set out in Clauses 15–18 of the Identity Cards Bill (required identity checks for public services) where the individual would be aware of the check, or where verification was undertaken without consent in the very specific, limited, purposes laid out in Clauses 19–23 of the Identity Cards Bill.

Police Force Structures

16. **Huw Irranca-Davies:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the recent HM inspectorate of constabulary report on police structures. [16792]

Mr. Charles Clarke: In September we published the findings of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's review of the capacity of police forces to provide the necessary level of protective services to safeguard the public from the threats posed by terrorism, organised crime and civil emergencies. The inspectorate found that the 43 force structure is no longer fit for purpose.

In the light of the inspectorate's clear professional advice, I have asked chief officers and police authorities to submit proposals for restructuring to me by the end of the year. I have made it clear that I fully endorse the inspectorate's conclusion that the creation of strategic forces offers the best long term business solution.

Extended Licensing Hours

17. **Dr. Cable:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the law and order implications of extended licensing hours. [16793]

Hazel Blears: The Government believes that the current licensing regime exacerbates crime and disorder by encouraging people to drink as much as possible before last orders and forcing large numbers of people on to the streets at exactly the same time. Licensing reforms will put an end to this practice and give licensing authorities the power to impose flexible licensing sanctions to address specific problems as well as additional powers for the police.

Asylum Seekers

18. **Mr. Carmichael:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the process for removing failed asylum seeker families. [16794]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The process for removing failed asylum seeking families varies depending upon the individual circumstances of each case. Once all appeal

rights have been exhausted, a family is expected to make immediate arrangements to leave and is made aware of its liability to be removed if it fails to do so voluntarily.

Welsh Police Forces

19. **Mr. Llwyd:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions he has had with *(a)* police authorities in Wales and *(b)* the Police Federation in Wales on the possible amalgamation of police forces. [16795]

20. **Mr. Jeremy Browne:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will conduct a review of the structure of police forces in England and Wales. [16796]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I and my officials have had several recent discussions with police authority chairs, including chairs of police authorities in Wales, on the issue of restructuring. I have invited the Association of Police Authorities, which represents police authorities in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, to be members of a steering group that will oversee the process.

We will maintain a regular dialogue with the police staff associations including the Police Federation of England and Wales, all of which will be invited to participate in this process as part of a stakeholder group.

Intercept Information

21. **Norman Baker:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on his policy on the use of intercept information in criminal proceedings. [16797]

Mr. Charles Clarke: As I said in a written statement to the House on 26 January this year, the Government continues to keep this issue under review.

Work is currently under way to examine the impact that imminent changes to communications technology will have on our interception capabilities and the implications of this for evidential use of intercept.

At the same time, we are examining whether a pre-trial sift procedure, as recommended by the noble Lord Newton, could provide the sort of protection that would be needed in order to use sensitive material in criminal proceedings.

I will report on the conclusions of the work in both these areas in the new year.

Police

22. **Mike Penning:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent guidance his Department has issued on the amount of time spent by police officers on the beat. [16798]

Hazel Blears: We have not issued guidance on the deployment of officers to beat duties as this is an operational matter for individual chief officers of police.

In line with the efficiency strategy for the police service we expect the service to increase time spent on front-line policing to around 72 per cent. by March 2008. This would be a gain equivalent to more than 12,000 extra officers over the next three years.

Immigration and Nationality Directorate

23. **Tony Lloyd:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of the performance of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate. [16799]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate continues to make good progress in delivering its PSA and other business targets.

Work to implement the Government's five-year asylum and immigration strategy is well under way in consultation with a range of stakeholders. The strategy will enable us to develop a simpler, clearer, tighter system which will lead to further improvements in performance.

Operation Minstead

24. **Lynne Featherstone:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the techniques used in Operation Minstead by the Metropolitan police to obtain voluntary DNA samples from black men in south London. [16800]

Hazel Blears: Operation Minstead is a large scale investigation by the Metropolitan police into a series of rapes and attempted rapes on elderly women in south London. The first offence was in 1992. A further 97 offences are being investigated, the most recent of which was in February 2005. The elderly traumatised victims have been able to provide some information to the police about the offender. The investigation has been under way for several years, but no-one has yet been caught and charged.

This is an operational policing matter for the Metropolitan Police Service. No formal assessment has been made by the Home Office of the techniques used in any aspect of the investigation.

We understand from the Metropolitan police that three reviews of Operation Minstead have been conducted by the MPS Murder Review Group to ensure procedural good practice. The MPS has also advised that the arrest policy was in accordance with Association of Chief Police Officers good practice guidance and had been checked with the Crown Prosecution Service.

Under-age Drinking

25. **Barbara Keeley:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to prevent the sale of alcohol to people aged under 16 years. [16801]

Paul Goggins: It is illegal to sell alcohol to anyone under 18 and police and other partners use a range of powers to help prevent the sale of alcohol to those who are under-age. From next month the penalties for those convicted of selling to underage drinkers will be raised significantly. The Government are also introducing in the Violent Crime Reduction Bill, a new power to close down licensed premises for up to 48 hours for selling alcohol to under 18's.

Advertising Expenditure

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total advertising expenditure of his Department was in 2004–05. [12061]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The amount spent by the Home Office on advertising in 2004–05 was £10.2 million. Information campaigns included Acquisitive Crime, Drugs, Child Protection, Police Recruitment, Guns and Domestic Violence.

Antisocial Behaviour Unit

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was claimed in *(a)* taxi fares and *(b)* hotel bills by the head of the antisocial behaviour unit in the last financial year. [16032]

Mr. Charles Clarke: We are unable to obtain this information without incurring disproportionate costs.

Anti-terrorism Laws

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many individuals have been issued with *(a)* derogatory and *(b)* non-derogatory control orders under the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005; and how many of these had restrictions or prohibitions made in respect of their (i) place of residence and (ii) movements in and around the United Kingdom; [12701]

(2) how many individuals have been arrested and detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 where he is seeking a derogatory control order; and for how many of these control orders have been issued. [12702]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I refer the right hon. Member to my statement of 16 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 23WS when I made my first three-monthly report to Parliament on the exercise of control order powers.

Communication Data

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to publish the revised draft of the acquisition and disclosure of communication data code of practice. [15779]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Pre-consultation version of the revised draft code of practice for the acquisition and disclosure of communications data, under Chapter II of Part I of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, is published on the Home Office website:

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs4/CoP_Pre_consultation_draft1.pdf

Formal public consultation on a revised draft code of practice is expected to take place in the autumn.

Departmental Advertising

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much *(a)* the Department and *(b)* non-departmental bodies for which the Department is responsible spent on advertising in 2004–05, broken down by media type. [8007]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information is as follows:

(a) Advertising figures for the Home Office shows that £10.2 million was spent on advertising:

£4.76 million on TV

£1.51 million on radio

£1.91 million on press/magazines

£2.01 million on outdoor posters

Information campaigns included acquisitive crime, drugs, recruitment of police officers, domestic violence, firearms and internet child protection.

(b) The Home Office does not hold advertising spend data for non-departmental bodies.

European Constitution

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is his policy that mutual recognition and approximation of laws as provided for in Articles III-269 and III-270 of the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe could be agreed without ratification of the Treaty. [15466]

Andy Burnham: Mutual recognition and approximation of laws as provided for in the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe cannot be agreed unless that treaty is ratified. However, there is significant work that can and is being continued in these fields under existing treaties and without ratification of the Constitutional treaty.

The EU has a programme of measures on mutual recognition including the agreed European arrest warrant and the European evidence warrant which is under negotiation. The EU has also established minimum provisions in some areas of the substantive criminal law and minimum penalties for a range of serious cross border crimes. These include trafficking in human beings and terrorism offences.

Food Procurement

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was spent by his Department on public procurement of food in the most recent year for which figures are available; and what proportion of that expenditure was covered under Crown Immunity on food safety matters. [5785]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The core Home Office do not buy food other than light refreshments for meetings. This is covered under the 2 Marsham Street PFI contract and expenditure will be included in the facilities management service charge. Information covering specific items such as this is not held centrally but in any case is likely to be minimal.

The Prison Service expended £44,087, £255.00 in the period April 2004 to March 2005 from its central contracts. The figure would exclude small/minor one off purchases made by establishments. This further information is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. The Food Safety Act removed Crown Immunity from the Prison Service so the amount aforementioned is subject to all relevant food hygiene regulations.

Identity Card

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what incentives will be put in place to encourage people to apply for an identity card in advance of their passport coming up for renewal. [13213]

Mr. Charles Clarke: There are no incentives currently planned to encourage people to apply for an identity card in advance of their passport renewal.

However, Government research conducted by Taylor Nelson Sofres demonstrated that 26 per cent. of passport holders would be prepared to take-up an ID card voluntarily before their passport expires. This research was published on 28 June 2005 and is available on the Identity Cards website.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the basis is for the statement on page 8 of the document, "Identity Cards Scheme Benefits Overview", that the ability for the police to check scene of crime marks against the National Identity Register will result in savings of £40 million per annum; and if he will make a statement. [13217]

Mr. Charles Clarke: We have used Home Office statistics on the success of police fingerprint systems and our understanding of the proposed operation of the Identity Card Scheme to model the benefit of identifying scenes of crime fingerprint lifts over and above that of existing police processes.

As more fingerprint lifts are identified, the police are able to eliminate those with legitimate access more quickly from their investigation while developing additional leads on suspects. Some of these leads will result in crime detections and halt criminal careers. This in turn will contribute to reducing economic harm caused by crime, which has also been well researched.

Together, these pieces of research allowed us to quantify the benefits of the ID card in this area at 40 million.

Illegal Drugs

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate his Department has made of the street price of illegal drugs in the last two years. [6373]

Mr. Charles Clarke: UK average street prices for illegal drugs for the past two years are shown in the tables. The figures are worked out on the basis of information provided to the National Criminal Intelligence Service by all UK law enforcement authorities.

	Herbal cannabis (£ per ounce)	*Cannabis resin (£ per ounce)*	*Cocaine (£ per gram)*
April 2003	82	76	56
August 2003	74	66	55
December 2003	72	66	55
April 2004	73	66	52
August 2004	71	62	53
December 2004	72	61	51
April 2005	77	61	51

	Crack (£ per 0.2g rock)	*Heroin (£ per gram)*	*Ecstasy (£ per dose)*
April 2003	19	61	6
August 2003	19	61	5
December 2003	19	62	5
April 2004	19	59	4
August 2004	19	56	4
December 2004	18	55	4
April 2005	19	53	4

	Amphetamine (per gram)	*Skunk (per ounce)*	*LSD (per dose)*
April 2003	9	127	3.10
August 2003	9	121	3
December 2003	9	114	3
April 2004	8	118	3
August 2004	9	121	3
December 2004	8	121	—
April 2005	9	123	4

Illegal Immigrants

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many employers have been fined for employing illegal immigrants in each year since 1997. [9591]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The latest available information on the number of persons found guilty under Section 8 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1996 for employing illegal immigrants and those found guilty under section 25 (1) of the Immigration Act 1971 relating to the entry of an illegal entrant are shown in the following table.

Section 25 (1) of the Immigration Act 1971 is legislation related to facilitating the entry of an illegal entrant. Some of those cases will have involved people who import and supply illegal workers. Offences of knowingly facilitating the entry of an asylum claimant, or leave to remain of a person, by means of deception were added by the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 Section 8 and it came into force on 27 January 1997.

Persons found guilty of offences under Immigration Acts 1971 Section 25 (1) and 1996 Section 8, at all courts, England and Wales 1997 to 2003

Number of persons

		Found guilty						
Act and Section	*Offence[1] description*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003[2]*
Asylum and Immigration Act 1996								
8	Employing a person subject to immigration control	n/a	1	1	4	1	1	1
Immigration Act 1971[3]								
25 (1) (a)	Knowingly facilitating the entry of an illegal entrant	130	115	149	141	141	204	165

Persons found guilty of offences under Immigration Acts 1971 Section 25 (1) and 1996 Section 8, at all courts, England and Wales 1997 to 2003

Number of persons

Act and Section	*Offence[1] description*	*Found guilty*						
		1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003[2]*
25 (1) (b)	Knowingly facilitating the entry of an asylum claimant	[4]—	3	6	3	9	5	9
25 (1) (c)	Knowingly facilitating leave to remain of persons by means of deception	1	5	6	7	3	6	9

n/a = ot applicable.
[1] Principal immigration offence.
[2] Provisional figures.
[3] As added by Section 5 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996.
[4] Nil.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many illegal immigrants have been found within UK borders in each year since 1997. [8531]

Mr. McNulty: The number of persons who have had enforcement action initiated against them as illegal entrants in each year since 1997 is given in the accompanying table.

People who have had enforcement action initiated against them may then be removed from the country. There may be some barriers to removal including:

judicial or human rights applications;

lack of documentation (without which an applicant cannot be returned);

absence of a travel route, lack of co-operation from receiving countries or scheduled flight services (resulting in lengthy documentation processes or use of charter flights).

Alternatively, some people may decide to leave voluntarily, after enforcement action has been initiated against them and others may chose to leave via assisted voluntary returns programmes run by the International Organisation for Migration.

Information on persons who have had enforcement action initiated against them in 2004 will be included in the Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom 2004. This was published in August and is available on the Home Office website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Persons against whom illegal entry enforcement action was initiated, 1997 to 2003[1,2]

	Number of persons
1997	14,390
1998	16,500
1999	21,165
2000	47,325
2001	69,875
2002	48,050
2003[3]	—

[1] Illegal entrants detected and issued enforcement notice.
[2] Figures rounded to the nearest 5.
[3] Data were not of sufficient quality for publication in 2003, however it is estimated that 22,950 illegal entrants had enforcement action initiated against them in this year. Due to poor data quality this is not an official national statistic.

Marriage Applications

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate has been made of the number of bogus marriages in the UK in each year since 1997; and what proportion of marriages this represented in each year. [301]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It is impossible to estimate the number of bogus marriages taking place in the UK as this is a clandestine activity. Where there are obvious signs of abuse, registrars will report their suspicions to the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) in the form of section 24 reports. Introduced as a provision of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, these were brought into force in January 2001. Since then, IND has received the following numbers of section of 24 reports:

	Number of section 24 reports received by IND
2001	752
2002	1,205
2003	2,684
2004	3,578
2005[1]	247

[1] To 30 April

Further measures to combat sham marriages were introduced in February this year. The new provisions require those subject to immigration control, who wish to give notice of marriage in the UK, to have:

an entry clearance for the purpose of marriage; or

a certificate of approval for marriage from the Home Office which shows that they are in the UK lawfully; or

proof that they have settled status in the UK.

Registrars will not accept notice without this evidence. Notice can only be given at one of a restricted number of designated register offices.

Since these provisions were introduced, there has been a marked decrease in the number of suspicious marriages reported by registrars. 166 section 24 reports were made in January 2005. This was reduced to 35 reports in February and 18 reports in March.

Passports

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will estimate the unit cost of a

passport in each of the next 10 years if the Identity Cards Bill is not passed by Parliament; and if he will make a statement. [10074]

Mr. Charles Clarke: In 2004–05 the actual average unit cost of issuing and delivering a passport was £38.30. In 2005–06, the UK Passport Service will begin issuing passports containing facial biometrics; these will be phased in progressively. The UK Passport Service has developed financial estimates only for the next two financial years. The average unit cost of producing a passport, accounting for the phasing in of facial biometrics, is estimated to be:

	£
2005–06	42.36
2006–07	57.93

No further estimates have been made as the Identity Cards Bill, which is now before Parliament, will change the basis on which passports are issued should it receive Royal Assent.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether external contractors will be involved in the introduction of facial and fingerprint biometrics in passports; and if he will make a statement. [6374]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The first generation of biometric passports will contain a single facial image that meets the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and US visa waiver scheme. The introduction of a biometric passport will be undertaken through current arrangements for passport application processing systems and passport book production. Third party suppliers for major components will be assessed in conjunction with the existing prime contractors to ensure value for money.

The development of the next generation of passports will consider further biometrics in the form of Iris and Fingerprint in light of evolving ICAO standards and EU requirements and international standards for travel documents. The Procurement strategy for the inclusion of a second biometric is under development and it is too early to determine the extent of external supplier involvement.

Police (Lancashire)

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police cells have been taken out of action in Lancashire since 1997. [10798]

Mr. Charles Clarke: This is an operational matter for the chief constable of Lancashire constabulary but I understand that the information is not available. However, I understand that in 1999 the total number of all police cells (including detention rooms) that were in regular use in the Lancashire police area was 186.

Policy Costings

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what costings of *(a)* Liberal Democrat and *(b)* Conservative party policies his Department has (i) undertaken, (ii) co-ordinated in the previous 12 months and (iii) advised upon in the previous 12 months. [7001]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 18 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1334W.

Press Office

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has been spent on the Department's press office; and how many press officers have been employed in each year since 2002. [9444]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Press Officers within the Home Office are employed at the Information Officer (IO) and Senior Information Officer (SIO) grades.

The Press Office spend for each year includes pay costs (all grades); overtime (all grades); all general office running costs and all other Press Office expenditure.

	Total	*Spend (£)*
2002–03	39	3,009,489
2003–04	39	2,959,966
2004–05[1]	43	[1]2,777,578

[1] 2004–05, based on the latest financial reports. However, the accounts have not yet closed and the total may change due to any reconciling that takes place.

The Press Office expanded in 2000–01 following an external consultant's review of its operation in 1999. The review recommended the creation of the "Newsdesk" so as to better meet the demands of the media. This improved efficiency from 'losing' in excess of 20 per cent. of the calls pre expansion, to a position where from June 2003 to June 2004, 91.8 per cent. of the 67,070 press calls received by the Newsdesk were answered.

The Home Office press office and the Prison Service press office merged in May 2001.

In 2003–04 the Press Office Newsdesk answered 60,039 calls; Press Office issued 583 press notices and held 29 briefings for the media. The Press Office operates 24 hours a day/7 days a week to meet demands of the 24 hour news agenda.

Racist Assaults

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of racist assaults which took place in England and Wales in the last year for which figures are available. [16788]

Paul Goggins: In 2004–05, there were 3,677 offences of racially and religiously aggravated common assault and 5,312 offences of less serious wounding recorded by the police in England and Wales.

Schengen Agreement

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list each element of the Schengen acquis to which the UK has acceded, with the *(a)* dates of accession and *(b)* the date on which this was notified to Parliament in each case. [16120]

Andy Burnham: As of 1 January 2005 the UK participates in the judicial cooperation, drugs cooperation, obligations on carriers, measures to combat trafficking of human beings and police cooperation parts of the Schengen acquis. The relevant Schengen articles and implementing conventions are listed in articles 1*(a)* (i), *(b)* , *(c)* (i) and *(d)* (i) of Council Decision 2000/365/EC, and the relevant Schengen building measures adopted since Decision 2000/365/EC are listed in the annexes to Council Decision 2004/926/EC.

My hon. Friend the Member for Don Valley (Caroline Flint) informed the House the application of parts of the provisions of the Schengen aquis to the UK would soon be ready for adoption, by way of a written answer on 15 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 1177W and informed the House by way of a written answer on 1 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 830W that Council Decision on the putting into effect of parts of the Schengen acquis by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (2004/926/EC) had come into force.

Stolen Passports

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many passports were stolen in each of the last three years for which figures are available, broken down by police force area; and how many of those passports were subsequently used fraudulently. [9957]

Andy Burnham *[holding answer 5 July 2005]:* The numbers of passports reported as lost or stolen for the last three years are as follows:

2002—166,358
2003—184,301
2004—306,406

The figures for 2002 and 2003 are collated from applications for replacement passports, and therefore may not accurately reflect all passports that were lost or stolen in those years. The figures for 2004 have been collated from new arrangements that more accurately reflect the numbers of passports reported to the UK Passport Service (UKPS) as lost or stolen. The reporting process does not discriminate between passports reported as lost and those reported as stolen. It is not possible to break down these totals by police force area, and UKPS do not have figures on the subsequent use of such passports in fraudulent activities.

Terrorist Attack (London)

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how long it took the emergency services to reach each of the underground trains attacked on 7 July; and how long it took to reach the bus that was attacked. [14158]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The following table is drawn from information provided by the Metropolitan Police, London Fire Brigade and London Ambulance Service. The times given are those at which the control room was first notified and when the first crews were officially recorded as arriving at the locations to which they were mobilised. This may not have been the trains themselves as a number were deep underground. As three of the scenes were at stations, British Transport Police Officers were often already on the scene. Additionally many police officers who were near the scenes self deployed to assist.

Response times—7 July attacks

	Metropolitan/City of London Police		*London Ambulance Service*		*London Fire Brigade*	
	Notification	*Arrival*	*Notification*	*Arrival*	*Notification*	*Arrival*
Aldgate Tube Station	08.51	08.59	08.51	09.03	08.56	09.00
Edgware Road Tube Station	09.08	09.22	09.02	09.09	08.58	09.04
Kings Cross/Russell Square Tube Station	08.56	09.07	09.04	09.14	09.02	09.07
Tavistock Square Bus	09.47	[1]—	09.48	09.58	09.47	[2]09.54

[1] Officers already on scene
[2] Approximately

Timber

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his Department's procurement policy includes timber used on and in the construction of departmental building projects; and if he will make a statement. [16315]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Office uses a standard timber procurement contract clause when tendering for construction and refurbishment projects. This stipulates that timber used in those projects must be from legal and sustainable sources.

Yarl's Wood Detention Centre

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to review the arrangements at Yarl's Wood Detention Centre, with particular reference to children being held there. [16345]

Mr. McNulty: Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre is currently used to detain single women and families with children. We have no plans to review or to change these arrangements.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Fraud

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females have been (i) charged with and (ii) convicted of benefit fraud in (A) Essex, (B) Southend and (C) England and Wales in each of the last five years for which figures are available; [15081]

(2) how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females pleaded guilty to benefit fraud in each area in England and Wales in each of the last five years for which figures are available; [15486]

(3) how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females aged (i) 17 to 24, (ii) 25 to 30, (iii) 31 to 35, (iv) 36 to 40 and (v) over 40 years were (1) charged and (2) convicted of benefit fraud in each of the last five years for which figures are available; [15487]

(4) how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females aged (i) 17 to 24, (ii) 25 to 30, (iii) 31 to 35, (iv) 36 to 40 and (v) over 40 years pleaded guilty to benefit fraud in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [15488]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not collated centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many convictions for benefit fraud there were in each year since 1997. [15440]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is in the table.

Convictions for benefit fraud

April to March	*DWP*	*Local authorities*
1997–98	11,386	700
1998–99	9,967	800
1999–2000	9,129	900
2000–01	11,403	1,100
2001–02	11,183	1,732
2002–03	9,267	2,503
2003–04	9,091	3,747
2004–05	8,573	4,688

Note:
1. For local authorities, figures prior to 2001–02 have been rounded to the nearest 100 because they include estimated values for non-responding local authorities.
Sources:
1. DSS/DWP figures are taken from Fraud Information By Sector and National Investigation Service (NIS) Resource Management.
2. From 2001–02 onwards, the numbers are taken from subsidy claim forms. Prior to this, the numbers are taken from management information returns.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps *(a)* he has taken and *(b)* plans to take to reduce benefit fraud; and if he will make a statement. [15489]

Mr. Plaskitt: We have firm targets to reduce fraud and error overpayments in income support and jobseeker's allowance for working age people by 33 per cent. by March 2004, and by 50 per cent. by March 2006.

By September 2004, we had reduced fraud and error in income support and jobseeker's allowance by 41 per cent. to 6.1 per cent. compared with the 1998 baseline figure of 10.4 per cent. achieving the first stage of the target. At the same time, we had reduced the level of fraud in working age income support and jobseeker's allowance by more than half.

This shows we are getting results in preventing, detecting and deterring fraud. We have improved data matching to catch people who work and claim and other tools in our armoury, such as the National Benefit Fraud Hotline mean we are clamping down on fraudsters.

The Targeting Fraud campaign has helped to increase public awareness of the problem of fraud and is currently targeting fraudsters and potential fraudsters directly, with messages of deterrence and detection, warning them that 'We're on to you'.

In 2004–05, in partnership with local authorities, we imposed nearly 43,000 prosecutions and sanctions—more than ever before.

Our efforts in the future will focus on further development of our effective criminal investigation structure for fraud and strong controls on the day-to-day processing of benefit claims to stop fraud before it starts.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on how many occasions the Child Support Agency's internal audit recommended that risk mitigation plans be *(a)* kept up to date and *(b)* actioned timeously. [6197]

Mr. Plaskitt: DWP internal audit has only made the recommendation once in the last three years. The recommendation was business unit specific and not applicable to the whole agency. Following the review and implementation of the business unit action plan the recommendation was cleared.

Contractors

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the contractors based in other EU member states that are providing services to his Department. [15445]

Margaret Hodge: The Department for Work and Pensions awards all contracts in line with the UK's objective of achieving value for money by selecting the most economically advantageous tender, and in line with EU Treaty obligations on transparency and free movement of goods and services.

The Department does not currently have any contracts directly with contractors based in other EU member states. It does have contracts with the following contractors whose holding companies have their head offices registered in other EU member states:

Arval PHH Vehicle Solutions Ltd.—whose holding company BMP Paribas is registered in France;

Atos Origin IT Services UK Ltd. and Atos Origin Medical Services UK Ltd.—whose holding company Atos Origin is registered in France;

Cap Gemini UK Plc—whose holding company Cap Gemini is registered in France;

Ecotec Research and Consulting Ltd.—whose holding company Ecory's is registered in the Netherlands;

Security Printing Systems Ltd.—whose holding company Authentos is registered in Germany;

Siemens Plc—whose holding company Siemens is registered in Germany; and

TNT UK Ltd.—whose holding company TPG is registered in the Netherlands.

CSA

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in circumstances where a parent with care moves to a non-EU country, whether the parent without care is required to *(a)* continue paying child support as originally assessed by the Child Support Agency, *(b)* pay according to a new assessment taking into

account the local circumstances of the new country of residence and *(c)* cease child support payments; and if he will make a statement. [15636]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Child Support Agency can only calculate and collect child maintenance if the person with care, non-resident parent and qualifying child are all habitually resident in the UK. However, if a non resident parent lives and works abroad for the Crown or a UK based company, the Child Support Agency may have the jurisdiction to continue the case. In these cases, they are required to pay child support for children who are habitually resident in the UK.

If a person with care lives abroad, whether within or outside of the European Union, the Child Support Agency has no jurisdiction. In these circumstances, the parties involved may decide between themselves to continue with the amount previously calculated by the Child Support Agency but the agency would not be involved in the process and would have no enforcement powers.

Alternatively the person with care or the non-resident parent can apply through the courts. The courts have reciprocal arrangements with more than 100 countries and territories that may allow a person living in one jurisdiction to claim maintenance from an ex-partner living in the other.

Departmental Expenditure

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much money was spent by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies on (i) electricity use and (ii) water and sewerage in each year since 1997. [14251]

Mrs. McGuire: Expenditure for electricity and water and sewerage services for the Department since it came into being in 2001, including all its agencies, is given in the following table.

Departmental expenditure

£

	Electricity	*Water*	*Sewerage*
2001–02	10,097,555	1,403,739	1,853,059
2002–03	11,394,575	1,527,770	1,893,489
2003–04	15,075729	1,052,435	2,663,058
2004–05	17,274,089	1,265,659	3,187,004

Disability Discrimination Act

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what discussions he has had with the examination boards on the implications of the implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act 1975 on students with hearing and speech problems with particular reference to their ability to take GCSE French; [16289]

(2) what steps he is taking to encourage examination bodies to ensure that students with hearing and speech problems are accommodated in GCSE French examinations from 2006. [16290]

Jacqui Smith: I have been asked to reply.

I have not held any meetings with the examination boards on this issue. However, my officials have held meetings with representatives of the Awarding Bodies, the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and the Regulators. It has been agreed that the criteria for modern foreign language GCSE qualifications will be reviewed and that disability groups will be invited to participate in the review. Students with hearing and speech problems will continue to be able to access GCSE French examinations in 2006.

The Awarding Bodies and the Regulators will be looking carefully at future access arrangements in the light of the extension of the Disability Discrimination Act to general qualification bodies.

Employment and Income (Forest of Dean)

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of levels of *(a)* employment and *(b)* income in Forest of Dean constituency; and if he will make a statement. [15845]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Harper, dated 10 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about employment and income in the Forest of Dean Constituency. (15845)

Over the 12-month period ending in December 2004, it is estimated that there were, on average, 40,000 people aged 16 and over resident in the Forest of Dean Constituency in employment.

This estimate is based on Annual Population Survey data which, as with any statistical sample survey, is subject to sampling variability.

The data are published on the Office for National Statistics Nomis(r) website at: www.nomisweb.co.uk.

HM Revenue and Customs estimate that the average taxable income of taxpayers, resident in the Forest of Dean Constituency, for 2002–03, was £20,000.

Estimates are published on the HM Revenue and Customs website at: www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/income_distribution/table-3–15.xls

Financial Assistance Scheme

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what reason pension funds for which the employer is solvent but winds up the scheme without funding it beyond the Minimum Funding Requirement are excluded from the Financial Assistance Scheme. [16325]

Mr. Timms: Solvent employers have a duty to support their schemes and provide the benefits members were expecting. Assistance funded by the taxpayer is not appropriate in cases where there is a solvent sponsoring employer.

GCSE Foreign Languages

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many students were exempt from the oral section of GCSE foreign language examinations due to a disability in each of the last five years. [16291]

Jacqui Smith: I have been asked to reply.

The number of students exempt from the oral section of GCSE foreign language examinations due to a disability in each of the past five years is as follows:

	OCR	AQA	EDEXCEL	Wales	Northern Ireland
2001	5	[1]—	[1]—	0	0
2002	3	[1]—	[1]—	1	0
2003	0	36	[1]—	2	0
2004	6	51	[1]—	2	0
2005	2	22	4	1	0

[1] No data available

This data has been supplied by the awarding bodies.

Incapacity Benefit

Edward Miliband: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Doncaster, North constituency are in receipt of incapacity benefit. [15066]

Mrs. McGuire: As at February 2005 there were 5,900 incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance claimants in Doncaster North.

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women received incapacity benefit in the Elmet constituency in the last period for which figures are available. [15734]

Mrs. McGuire: As at February 2005 there were 1,600 men and 1,200 women claiming incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance in the Elmet constituency.

Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people are receiving industrial injuries disablement benefit; and how many are in Pembrokeshire. [13954]

Margaret Hodge: As at December 2004 there were 340,810 people in Great Britain receiving industrial injuries disablement benefit, including 575 in the Pembrokeshire local authority area.

Jobcentre Plus

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment his Department has made of the recommendation by the Select Committee on Work and Pensions in February that Jobcentre Plus staff cuts should be postponed until delays caused by technology and problems with service quality are overcome. [15036]

Margaret Hodge: The Work and Pensions Select Committee has not made any recommendations about postponing staff reductions in Jobcentre Plus.

The departmental efficiency challenge is under constant scrutiny through a system of steering committees, programme boards and gates and the Office of Government Commerce Gateway reviews. These mechanisms, in addition to the detailed planning and monitoring processes, provide an appropriate platform to manage risks to the programme and its constituent parts.

Local Government Pensions

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the financial position of Forest of Dean district council pension scheme. [15846]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

Forest of Dean district council is an employer member of the Local Government Pension Scheme as administered by Gloucestershire county council. When carrying out actuarial valuations of individual funds, each actuary sets individual contribution rates for each employers' liabilities and their own work forces, balanced against the overall performance of the fund. At the time of the 2004 valuation, the Gloucestershire county council pension fund had overall assets to meet 70 per cent. of its liabilities. Forest of Dean district council have chosen to phase the increase in its contribution rate over three years and the pension fund's actuary has set an employer contribution rate of 14.9 per cent. (2006), 17.2 per cent. (2007) and 19.5 per cent. (2008) of pensionable payroll as part of a process to secure the county council's pension fund's ongoing solvency.

Operation Gangmaster

Jim Sheridan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many investigations into second stage processing have been carried out by Operation Gangmaster since its establishment; [15164]

(2) how many labour providers operating in second stage processing have been *(a)* investigated, *(b)* arrested and charged for breaches of the law and *(c)* convicted for offences under Operation Gangmaster since its establishment; [15165]

(3) what assessment has been undertaken of Operation Gangmaster since the introduction of the Gangmasters (Licensing) Act 2004; and what plans there are to make further such assessments. [15168]

Mr. Plaskitt: I refer my hon. Friend to the written answer I gave on 14 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1269W.

Jim Sheridan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the progress of Operation Gangmaster since the introduction of the Gangmasters (Licensing) Act 2004. [15167]

Mr. Plaskitt: Operation Gangmaster is one of a number of cross Government initiatives which DWP actively supports. In addition to Operation Gangmaster the Department has supported the setting up of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority and will provide support for the Joint Workplace Enforcement Pilot, a cross Government initiative aimed at tackling exploitation of labour in the West Midlands.

Operation Gangmaster facilitates the exchange of cross Government intelligence to complement the routine enforcement action taken by individual Departments.

Pension Credit

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much has been unclaimed in pension credits in each year since they were introduced. [15109]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not yet available. Latest estimates of the average amount of minimum income guarantee (MIG) unclaimed by male and female pensioners can be found in the Department's report 'Income Related Benefits: Estimates of Take-Up in 2002–03', which is available in the Library. Estimates of take-up in 2003–04 will cover the first six months of pension credit and are expected to be released by the end of 2005. MIG was replaced by pension credit from 6 October 2003.

Pensioners

Edward Miliband: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many state retirement pensioners there are in Doncaster, North. [15418]

Mr. Timms: The number of state pension recipients in the parliamentary constituency of Doncaster, North as at 30 September 2004 was 16,100.

Notes:
1. Figure is rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. Figure is based on a five per cent. sample and is therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
3. Parliamentary constituencies are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant Office for National Statistics postcode directory.

Source:
IAD Information Centre, five per cent. sample.

Pensions

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he is taking to *(a)* enable women to build up their own entitlement to a pension, *(b)* encourage the provision of private and occupational pensions that work more effectively for women and *(c)* tackle the inequalities and pensions provision which affect women. [15407]

Mr. Plaskitt: To enable women to build up their own entitlement to a pension, we have introduced state second pension which means that women are now just as likely as men to be accruing second-tier state pension rights. The national minimum wage has boosted the earnings of female low earners, enabling more women to start building up state pensions. Separating the primary threshold level from the lower earnings limit means that many low earners are now building up basic and state second pension rights without having to pay contributions.

To encourage the provision of private and occupational pensions that work for women, we introduced part-time workers regulations which ensure that terms and conditions of employment, including those related to access to occupational pension schemes, do not discriminate against part-time workers. We have also introduced stakeholder pensions to offer a low-cost, portable and flexible pension option which can be particularly suitable for women taking career breaks. Measures in the Pensions Act 2004, such as new rules to increase the pension rights of early leavers, are also beneficial to women.

To tackle the inequalities in pension provision which affect women pensioners today, pension credit and other tax and benefit changes have lifted 1.3 million women out of poverty. Fair outcomes for women and carers is one of our principles for future reform, and will be one of the criteria on which any proposals will be judged. As part of the wider national pensions debate an event focussing on women and pensions will be held and a report discussing the issue will be published later in the year.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 11 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 682W, on pension scheme records, what requirement there is on former trustees to maintain records of schemes which have been wound up. [15768]

Mr. Plaskitt: Under pensions legislation there is no requirement for trustees to maintain records after a pension scheme has been wound up. At that point the trustees cease to become trustees of the scheme.

However, tax regulations require the trustees of an approved occupational pension scheme to keep signed scheme accounts, signed actuarial valuation reports and records of major transactions for six years, irrespective of whether the scheme winds up during this period.

PFI

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what assessment his Department has made of *(a)* the sustainability and environmental impacts of private finance initiative (PFI) projects and *(b)* the effectiveness of the PFI process in delivering environmentally sustainable projects; [14247]

(2) what role his Department *(a)* has taken and *(b)* plans to take to make the private finance initiative (i) process and (ii) contracts more accountable and transparent in terms of environmental sustainability in his Department; [14248]

(3) what steps he is taking to ensure that private finance initiative projects for which his Department is responsible create the minimum of environmental damage. [14483]

Mr. Plaskitt: Under the Private Finance Initiative, the estate of the former DSS, was transferred to the private sector in April 1998 for the provision of fully serviced accommodation. Following the formation of the Department for Work and Pensions, the estate of the former employment service became subject to the same partnership contract (known as PRIME) in December 2003. Within the contract, there are specific clauses that cover environmental impacts, and encourage the private sector partner to develop environmental improvements The Department's Estates partner—Land Securities Trillium, whose Environmental Management System is accredited to International Standard ISO 14001, works closely with the DWP corporate Sustainable Development Team to identify opportunities for environmental improvements. The Sustainable Development Team contract manages this element of the partnership, and continually assesses performance. Regular partnership meetings are held between the Department and Land Securities Trillium to monitor progress.

The partnership approach has enabled innovative measures to be developed—such as the use of spend to save projects designed to improve energy and water efficiency across the estate, and a programme to maximise the recycling of paper waste. Full details of all

measures can be found within the annual DWP Sustainable Development Report, to which Land Securities Trillium make a full contribution.

The current departmental approvals process includes sustainable development as an overarching commitment that all change programmes need to incorporate into their plans. This will ensure that any future Private Finance Initiatives include sustainable development issues, as PRIME successfully did, from the outset.

Policy Costings

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what costings of *(a)* Liberal Democrat and *(b)* Conservative party policies his Department has (i) undertaken, (ii) co-ordinated in the previous 12 months and (iii) advised upon in the previous 12 months. [7005]

Margaret Hodge: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer given by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary on 18 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1334W.

Private Finance Projects

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 22 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1076W, on private finance projects, what the total value of assets and liabilities for each of the listed private finance initiatives and public private partnerships is that are recorded on the Government balance sheet. [16133]

Margaret Hodge: An on-balance sheet private finance initiative contract is held with ICB Ltd. by Health and Safety Laboratories for the provision of serviced accommodation and support functions. The contract was undertaken on 28 October 2004 for a period of 32 years and 29 weeks.

As at 31 March 2005, the following amounts were the assets, prepayments and liabilities held on the Department for Work and Pensions' balance sheet:

	£ million
Fixed Assets	
Land and Buildings	57.267
Furniture and Fittings	2.453
Prepayment	
Due within 1 year	0.154
Due after 1 year	4.383
Liabilities	
Due after 1 year	57.607

These figures are subject to audit. There were no on-balance sheet contracts held prior to October 2004.

Race Relations

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what arrangements are in place to ensure that bodies within the responsibility of his Department comply with the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. [3558]

Mrs. McGuire: Governance processes established across the whole Department ensure that progress is reported and measured on a regular basis. A Diversity and Equality Steering Group meets regularly and is made up of senior civil servants and representatives from across the Department. The group is responsible for agreeing and directing action and priorities across DWP. To support this work, each operational area within DWP has its own action plan and governance arrangement. DWP has published a Race Equality Scheme which sets out our progress to date and priorities for the future. DWP publishes a summary of progress annually and reviews the entire scheme once every three years.'

DWP is responsible for 15 non-departmental public and independent statutory bodies. Three of these associated bodies are subject to both the general and specific duties of the Act with regards to race equality. They are the Disability Rights Commission, the Health and Safety Commission and the Health and Safety Executive. Consequently, this means they have a legislative requirement to publish their own schemes.

The remaining bodies, while not being formally subject to any duties under the Act, have set out statements of intent within the Department's Race Equality Scheme.

The functions of two of these bodies are linked closely with those of two of the Department's agencies and their functions are included in their race equality schemes. Remploy's functions are included in the Jobcentre Plus Race Equality Scheme and those of the Disability Living Allowance Advisory Board are covered by the Disability and Carers Service Race Equality Scheme.

Recycling

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of *(a)* copying paper and *(b)* paper for printed publications used by the Department in (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05 was from recycled sources; and how much post consumer waste this paper contained. [14388]

Mr. Plaskitt: Details of the percentage of paper for copying and printed publications that was from recycled sources and how much post consumer waste they contained are as follows:

In 2003–04 2,149,853 reams of copier paper were purchased by the Department for Work and Pensions. Of this 5.3 per cent. was recycled paper. In 2004–05 1,908,633 reams of copier paper were purchased by the Department for Work and Pensions. Of this 10.85 per cent. was recycled paper.

Recycled copier paper on the Department for Work and Pensions Stationery Framework Agreement contains a minimum of 80 per cent. post consumer waste, however, papers containing 100 per cent. post consumer waste are also available.

Paper for printed publications

In 2003–04 5,164 metric tonnes of paper were purchased for printed publications. Of this 41 per cent. met the 75 per cent. recycled fibre content specification. Information for 2004–05 is not yet available, although a report will be provided within the next annual DWP

sustainable development report due to be published in November. From January 2006 the Department will move to using 100 per cent. recycled paper for its printed publications.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list his Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports in each case stating (i) the name of each paper used and (ii) the recycled and post consumer recycled content of each paper. [14393]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is as follows.

Copier Paper:

Banner Business Supplies

Office Depot

The Paper Company

Glenmore

Premier Paper

Recycled Paper used to date:

Evolve Office 100 per cent. recycled, 100 per cent. pcw

Niceday 3500 100 per cent. recycled, 80 per cent. pcw

Xerox Recycled 100 per cent. recycled, 100 per cent. pcw.

From 1 September 2005 the sole supplier will be Banner Business Supplies.

Stationery

Edwin Buckley and Co. Ltd.

Trafford Print Colour Ltd.

Printed stationery has no recycled content.

Envelopes

Banner Business Supplies 100 per cent. recycled buff manila 80gsm

Reports

New Town

Astron

Sandy Press

Belmont Press

During 2003–04, of the total volume of paper purchased for printed materials (5,164 metric tonnes) 41 per cent. met the 75 per cent. recycled content specification contained within the Government "Quick Wins". Figures are not yet available for 2004–05—however from January 2006 the Department will be using only recycled paper (100 per cent. post consumer waste).

SMS2

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment his Department has made of the impact of the introduction of the SMS2 system on staff and customers. [15037]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Acting Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to my hon. Friend.

Letter from Lesley Strathie to Mr. Bob Laxton, dated 10 October 2005:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning what assessment has been made of the impact of the introduction of the SMS2 IT system on staff and customers. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Acting Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

May I assume that when referring to SMS2 that you are referring to the Customer Management System (CMS). CMS2 is the IT system that has been implemented to support a number of changes in the way that our customers claim benefits through Jobcentre Plus. These changes are part of a wider programme of service delivery modernisation in Jobcentre Plus that also include, for example, greater use of telephone based contact with our customers and the adoption of standard operating processes.

The impact of CMS is part of a wider assessment of Jobcentre Plus modernisation activity and investment. This will be taken forward as part of the annual review of the Jobcentre Plus Integratad Business Case. This review takes place during Spring 2006 and reports formally to Ministers and the Treasury. We are currently working towards a first assessment of CMS to inform the 2006 review of the Jobcentre Plus Integrated Business Case, and this assessment will include a staff survey, currently scheduled for early 2006.

Customer feedback on our services is gained through the Jobcentre Plus National Customer Satisfaction Surveys, and the results of the 2004 survey were published on 30th September 2004. The 2005 survey commenced in September. The surveys give us a clear picture about how our services are perceived by customers, including how well delivered they are, and how easy or difficult they are to access. However, as these surveys are based on a national sample, of 3000 or so customers, and CMS is still in the process of being deployed on a roll out basis across Jobcentre Plus, the 2005 survey may be too soon to fully capture the impact on customers.

I hope this is helpful.

Sustainable Development

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the environmental impact against sustainable development criteria of bids made for contracts awarded by his Department. [14480]

Mrs. McGuire: The Procurement Reference Manual provides staff in the Department for Work and Pensions with guidance on how to incorporate sustainability issues within the procurement process. It is our policy to specify sustainable goods and services. The environmental impacts of any contract should be considered during the initial stages of a tender exercise—and sustainability criteria are therefore built into the specification. All bids received are considered against this sustainable specification.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he is taking to provide the delivery of sustainable development within Government. [14539]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department for Work and Pensions has a Sustainable Development Steering Group made up of senior members of each of its client groups and businesses who are responsible for driving and monitoring progress, and a dedicated corporate Sustainable Development Team which provides guidance and oversees delivery.

The Department publishes an annual Sustainable Development Report that reports on progress on the targets within the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate.

The Department will publish a Sustainable Development Action Plan in December 2005 demonstrating how it will meet the commitments within the UK Strategy for Sustainable Development.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps have been taken by his Department to review its arrangements for public reporting of sustainable development impacts. [14542]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions has published a separate annual report on sustainable development since November 2001 and these are available in the Library. The Department is committed to the continued annual publication of this comprehensive report.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what arrangements his Department has made to report publicly on its key sustainable development impacts. [14543]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions produces an annual report on its sustainable development impacts which is available in the Library The report is available to the public via the Department's internet site, although a hard copy can be provided upon request. The report contains information on progress on the targets contained within the "Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate" and also the consequences of the wider social impacts of the Department's operations.

Unemployment

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what percentage of people in Dudley, North were unemployed in each year since 1997; and what estimate he has made of the change in the amount of benefits paid as a result of the change in unemployment levels. [15413]

Mr. Timms: Information on the change in the amount paid in benefits due to the change in employment since 1997 is not available at constituency level. In Great Britain it is estimated that, compared to 1996–97, we are now spending £4.5 billion a year less on the cost of unemployment related benefits as a result of the increase in employment levels.

Information on unemployment in Dudley, North constituency is in the table.

Unemployment in Dudley, North constituency

	Number of people	*Proportion of working age population*
1997	2,892	5.4
1998	2,315	4.3
1999	2,614	4.9
2000	2,448	4.6
2001	2,197	4.1
2002	2,155	4.0
2003	2,098	3.9
2004	1,902	3.6
2005	2,074	3.9

Note:

Figures are claimant count for June of each year.

Source:

DWP statistics.

Unemployment Benefit

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost of providing unemployment benefits for adults who have previously been in care in the last year for which figures are available. [15707]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information requested is not available.

Vehicle Emissions

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what change there has been in *(a)* road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions and *(b)* incidence of single occupancy car commuting in his Department since (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05. [14252]

Mr. Plaskitt: The following table gives figures for road transport vehicle carbon emissions:

Vehicle emissions

	Kg CO_2	*Reduction (percentage)*
2003–04	20,191,096	—
2004–05	14,895,328	26

The Department measures and reports on CO_2 emissions for road transport vehicles as its contribution to target B1 of the "Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate". During 2004–05 changes have been made to improve the data collected to measure progress against this target, as well as to the calculation methodology.

The Department has already stated its intention not to gather information on single occupancy car commuting for target B3 of the "Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate" as this would be excessively resource intensive, given the size of the estate—there are currently 117,000 staff located across 1,700 sites. The Department continues to encourage the use of Green Travel.

Watermark Project

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department has joined the Watermark project. [14391]

Mr. Plaskitt: Prior to the formation of the Department for Work and Pensions, the Department of Social Security joined the Watermark project. The Watermark project ended in March 2003.

HEALTH

Accident and Emergency Departments (Essex)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were treated by accident and emergency departments in *(a)* Essex, *(b)* the Southend-on-Sea Hospital Trust and *(c)* the Basildon Hospital Trust in the last 12 months. [15609]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of attendances at accident and emergency departments, minor injury units and walk in centres within the Essex Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area are shown in the table.

	Quarter	Essex SHA	Southend Hospital National Health Service Trust	Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
2005-06	1	137,404	21,889	25,392
2004-05	4	129,379	20,451	24,721
2004-05	3	125,428	20,029	25,366
2004-05	2	128,462	21,028	24,767
Total	—	520,673	83,397	100,246

Source:
Foundation Trust.

Acute Hospitals

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the proportion of patients in acute hospitals who *(a)* have written care plans and *(b)* are allocated a named nurse; and if she will make a statement. [15771]

Mr. Byrne: Data are not collected for either the number of patients with written care plans nor the number of patients with a named nurse.

All patients should have a written care plan and be allocated a named nurse when they are admitted to hospital.

Aimspro

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many multiple sclerosis sufferers have been treated with Aimspro on a trial basis; and what assessment has been made of the effects; [15652]

(2) for what reasons the manufacturers of Aimspro have recently been instructed to stop supplying the drug to multiple sclerosis sufferers; and what assessment has been made of the effects; [15653]

(3) what estimate she has made of the numbers of *(a)* multiple sclerosis sufferers waiting to use and *(b)* prescribing general practitioners waiting to prescribe Aimspro; [15654]

(4) if she will take urgent steps to resolve the issues which have led to the withdrawal of Aimspro from multiple sclerosis sufferers who have been receiving it on a trial basis. [15655]

Jane Kennedy: Twelve patients entered an authorised clinical trial at an Oxford hospital, although one of these dropped out before completion. A number of patients were recruited into an authorised clinical trial at a London hospital, but the trial was halted with only one patient completed. No other authorised clinical trials of Aimspro have been conducted in the United Kingdom.

The Oxford trial examined the effectiveness of Aimspro in visual impairment associated with optic neuritis. The trial failed in its primary and secondary endpoints, but showed some apparent improvement in peripheral vision. However, the effect was not significantly different to placebo. The results do not support Daval International's claim of "dramatic improvement".

The manufacture and supply of Aimspro is subject to the manufacturer holding the necessary manufacturing authorisation issued by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and supported by the MHRA's medicines inspectorate.

No instructions have been issued to the manufacturers of Aimspro to stop supplying the drug. None of the product is currently available because the nominated manufacturer is not able to manufacture the product to acceptable standards and remains unlicensed.

No data are available to inform an assessment of the effects resulting from the non-availability of Aimspro.

There are approximately 85,000 multiple sclerosis sufferers in the UK. The Department has no knowledge of the number of those who are waiting to use Aimspro nor of the number of prescribing general practitioners waiting to prescribe Aimspro.

The MHRA has provided Daval International and its nominated contract manufacturer with a considerable amount of help and advice since early 2005 concerning the manufacture of Aimspro. The nominated manufacturer is not currently able to manufacture the product to acceptable standards and remains unlicensed. The MHRA has advised Daval on the use of alternative licensed manufacturers and continues to liaise closely with the company regarding manufacturing and supply issues.The speed with which the product can be made available for use in clinical trials or for supply on a named-patient basis is dependent on the progress that Daval and the manufacturer of Aimspro wish to make.

Ambulance Response Times

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average response time of the ambulance service to emergency calls from locations in each London borough was in the last period for which figures are available. [16224]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to the hon. Member for Brent East (Sarah Teather) on 30 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1750W.

Avian Flu

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* advice and *(b)* resources her Department is giving to London health authorities to prepare for a potential avian influenza epidemic; and if she will make a statement. [15729]

Caroline Flint: The Department has published operational guidance for the national health service, entitled "Influenza Pandemic Contingency Planning: Operational Guidance for Health Service Planners", to help inform planning in NHS organisations. In addition, the Department has tasked the Health Protection Agency to produce infection control guidance and clinical management protocols, which will help NHS in planning effectively. These will be available in the next few months. Further guidance and information is available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/pandemicflu

Planning for emergencies is a core task for NHS bodies. The Government are purchasing 14.6 million courses of antivirals for the NHS to use in treating cases of pandemic influenza and has recently invited manufacturers to tender for a contract to supply a limited amount of vaccine against the H5N1 avian influenza. This vaccine could offer some protection against a H5N1 influenza strain and could be used to support the NHS response.

Blood Donation (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people from Castle Point have given blood in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [15593]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of blood donors in the Castle Point area is not held centrally. However, the National Blood Service has data for the number of active blood donors for the Anglia region, of which Castle Point is a part, and the total number of collections made in the Anglia region over the last five years, which is shown in the table.

Anglia region

	Average size of active donor base	*Total collections*
2001–02	194,447	283,375
2002–03	186,633	275,115
2003–04	177,152	272,232
2004–05	171,003	256,586

Carers

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of carers who have received an assessment of their needs. [15774]

Mr. Byrne: In 2003–04, an estimated 348,000 carers received a carers assessment or review during the year in England, either separately or jointly with the client. Around 70,000 of these carers were assessed or reviewed separately.

Community Pharmacies (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many community pharmacies in Castle Point have *(a)* opened and *(b)* closed since 1997. [15592]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of community pharmacies by constituency is not centrally collected. However, information prior to 2002 is available by health authority (HA) and from 2002, by primary care trust (PCT).

Castle Point constituency is currently served by Castle Point and Rochford PCT and previously sat within the South Essex HA.

In 2001–02, South Essex HA had a total of 141 community pharmacies. The HA comprised the following areas:

Billiercay
Brentwood
Wickford
Southend-on-Sea
Thurrock
Basildon
Castle Point
Rochford

Table 1 shows the number of community pharmacies by HA prior to 2002. Table 2 shows the number of community pharmacies by PCT from 2002 onwards.

Table 1: By HA—1997 to 2002

	Total number of pharmacies in South Essex HA	*Opened*	*Closed*
1997–98	146	0	0
1998–99	146	0	0
1999–2000	144	0	2
2000–01	143	0	1
2001–02	141	0	2

Table 2: By PCT—2002 to 2004

	Total number of pharmacies in Castle Point and Rochford PCT	*Opened*	*Closed*
2002–03	32	0	0
2003–04	32	0	0

Continuing Care

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which stakeholders have been consulted in the development of the proposed new framework for continuing care funding. [15776]

Mr. Byrne: Work to produce the national framework for continuing care is ongoing, as is stakeholder communication, engagement and involvement.

My hon. Friend the Member for South Thanet (Dr. Ladyman) met with the ombudsman specifically to discuss continuing care, and the subject will have come up in numerous visits and meetings. I have met with local authority representatives and also with the Social

Care Institute for Excellence, the General Social Care Council and Turning Point, when the subject of continuing care was raised.

Officials have studied the evidence given to the Health Select Committee inquiry on continuing care. Regular meetings take place with staff from the ombudsman's office to ensure their full participation and involvement in the development of the national framework.

Officials held three national meetings on continuing care; on 17 December 2004, 19 January 2005 and 4 March 2005 to start to scope the issues that the national framework is to address and gather suggestions for ways forward. These meetings were attended by representatives from the ombudsman's office and representatives from strategic health authorities, primary care trusts and local authorities including representatives from the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS).

Meetings and/or discussions have also occurred with numerous organisations, members of the public, researchers and academics, including the Royal College of Nursing, Help the Aged, Age Concern, the Alzheimer's Society and the Long Term Medical Conditions Alliance.

Officials have also had contact with these bodies, and with many other voluntary organisations and professional bodies including the English Community Care Association, Leonard Cheshire, Carers UK, POhWER, the British Medical Association, the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service, the ADSS and the LGA, Radar, Headway, the Neurological Alliance, Scope, the National Care Forum, the National Centre for Independent Living, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, the Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations and the National Care Homes Association. Many of these attended the stakeholder summit that was held on 21 July to share progress, and to gain contributions in from organisations with patients and service users, carer networks and professional organisations.

An electronic discussion forum has been established for regular communication and through which staff from across the health and social care community and wider stakeholder groups can contribute to specific parts of the framework.

Deaf/Blind Disabilities

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what services are available for those with deafblind disabilities within Hertfordshire; and if she will make a statement; [16227]

(2) what intervenor services are supplied specifically to children affected with deafblind or similar disabilities within Hertfordshire; and if she will make a statement. [16229]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Dentistry

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many registered national health service dental hygienists there are in each London borough. [16221]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what resources she has allocated to the pilots for the new NHS dental contract. [14182]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Personal dental services (PDS) pilots, on which the proposed new contractual arrangements for national health service dentists from April 2006 are closely based, have been running in phases since 1998. PDS pilot schemes now cover over 30 per cent. of dentists. In 2004–05, the Department allocated some £261 million to primary care trusts (PCTs) to fund the services provided by these schemes.

Following the publication of Options For Change in 2002, the NHS Modernisation Agency set up 48 field sites to test models for new ways of working and identify key lessons for the future. In addition to funding for the dental services provided in these sites, host PCTs received £405,000 to facilitate the sites and cover any additional expenses incurred.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many pilots are taking place for the new NHS dental contract. [14183]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As of 31 August 2005, 2,373 dental practices were working as dental pilots under personal dental services (PDS) agreements. Of these, 210 were field sites set up under the National Health Service Modernisation Agency to develop the new ways of working. Learning from all the PDS sites has been taken on board in developing the new contractual arrangements that are being put in place for 1 April 2006.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what limit she has set on the number of new patients an individual dental practice can take as part of the pilots for the new NHS dental contract. [14184]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has not set a limit on the number of additional national health service patients a practice maybe contracted to look after as part of a pilot personal dental service arrangement. The number of additional patients will depend upon the individual circumstances of the practice and the proposed pilot arrangements.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dental practices in Castle Point have *(a)* opened and *(b)* closed since 1997. [15472]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As at 31 August 2005, there were 13 dental surgeries within Castle Point parliamentary constituency. Of these, one had opened since 31 August 1997. No dental surgeries have closed within this area in the same time period.

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average cost was of an NHS dental check-up in each London borough in each year since 1997. [15868]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The cost for a national health service dental check-up, defined in the Statement of Dental Remuneration as clinical examination, advice, charting—including monitoring of periodontal status—and report, is fixed across England.

This cost is set by the Department and changes each year, usually in April. However, in both December 1997 and December 1998, there were changes made to costs.

The dentist fees and patient charges, which are charged at 80 per cent. of dentists fees, since 1997 are shown in the table.

£

Date	Dentist fees	Patients charge (80 per cent. of dentist fees)
April 1997	5.30	4.24
December 1997	5.40	4.32
April 1998	5.65	4.52
December 1998	5.80	4.64
April 1999	5.95	4.76
April 2000	6.15	4.92
April 2001	6.40	5.12
April 2002	6.65	5.32
April 2003	6.85	5.48
April 2004	7.05	5.64
April 2005	7.30	5.84

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people are registered with an NHS dentist in England, broken down by local authority area. [15874]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Figures for 31 August 2005 have been placed in the Library.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average cost was of a national health service dental check-up in Southend in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [16694]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The cost for a national health service dental check-up, defined as "clinical examination, advice, charting (including monitoring of periodontal status) and report", in the Statement of Dental Remuneration, is fixed across England. This cost is set by the Department and changes each year, usually in April. However, in January 1994, December 1996, 1997, 1998 there were also changes made to costs.

The dentist fees and patient charges (80 per cent. of fee) since 1994 are shown in the table.

£

Date	Dentist fee	Patient charge
January 1994	4.75	3.80
April 1994	4.90	3.92
April 1995	5.00	4.00
April 1996	5.15	4.12
December 1996	5.20	4.16
April 1997	5.30	4.24
December 1997	5.40	4.32
April 1998	5.65	4.52
December 1998	5.80	4.64
April 1999	5.95	4.76
April 2000	6.15	4.92
April 2001	6.40	5.12
April 2002	6.65	5.32
April 2003	6.85	5.48
April 2004	7.05	5.64
April 2005	7.30	5.84

Note:
Some adult patients (around 25 per cent.) and all children are exempt from charges.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the staffing level against establishment in the dental workforce in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Castle Point and Rochford Primary Care Trust in the last 12 months. [15612]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of dentists over the past year are shown in the table.

General dental services (CDS) and personal dental services (PDS): number of dentists in the GDS or PDS in the specified areas

	Essex Strategic Health Authority	Castle Point and Rochford Primary Care Trust
June 2004	591	50
September 2004	597	52
December 2004	602	53
March 2005	621	56
June 2005	646	60

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many registered national health service dentists there are in each London borough. [16220]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows the number of dentists with open general dental services (CDS) or personal dental services (PDS) contracts in London local authorities as at 31 August 2005.

CDS and PDS: Numbers of dentists in London local authorities (LAs) as at 31 August 2005

LA area	Number
City of London	13
Barking and Dagenham	65
Barnet	212
Bexley	100
Brent	178
Bromley	173
Camden	175
Croydon	215
Ealing	214
Enfield	168
Greenwich	122
Hackney	84
Hammersmith and Fulham	155
Haringey	144
Harrow	134
Havering	127
Hillingdon	137
Hounslow	151
Islington	133
Kensington and Chelsea	96
Kingston upon Thames	82
Lambeth	151
Lewisham	132
Merton	111
Newham	112
Redbridge	153

CDS and PDS: Numbers of dentists in London local authorities (LAs) as at 31 August 2005

LA area	*Number*
Richmond upon Thames	112
Southwark	111
Sutton	109
Tower Hamlets	99
Waltham Forest	115
Wandsworth	173
Westminster	205

Notes:
1. The figures are based on the numbers of dentists with open GDS or PDS contracts.
2. The dentists include principals, assistants and trainees.
3. Prison contracts have not been included in this analysis.
4. The areas have been defined using practice postcodes within the specified area.
5. The figures provide a snapshot of the number of individual dentists with an open contract at 31 August.
6. A dentist with a GDS or PDS contract may provide as little or as much national health service treatment as he or she chooses or has agreed with the primary care trust.
7. The Dental Practice Board has no information concerning the amount of time dedicated to NHS work by individual dentists.
8. The figures take into account any notifications received up to 15 September 2005.
9. Areas have been defined using the Office of National Statistics all fields postcode directory—February 2005.

Source:
Dental Practice Board.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients have been registered with an NHS dentist in each primary care trust in England in *(a)* 2002–03, *(b)* 2003–04 and *(c)* 2004–05. [6229]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Registration data have been placed in the Library. Data for 2003 and 2004 include personal dental service counts of patients seen in the past 15 months as a proxy for registrations for some schemes. This is to give greater consistency with registrations data for the general dental service, which has a 15 month re-registration period. Many personal dental service schemes use longer periods and some, such as dental access centres, do not require patients to register.

Departmental Buildings

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total floor space area is of buildings owned or leased by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its agencies. [15183]

Jane Kennedy: The Department and its executive agencies occupy two freehold properties comprising 23,217.8 square metres (m^2) both occupied by the Department; and 25 leased properties comprising 48,268.02 m^2 occupied by the Department and 17,641.10 m^2 occupied by its agencies.

Departmental Conferences

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the Department spent on organising or sponsoring conferences for each of the last five years. [10274]

Jane Kennedy: This information is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Contractors

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list contractors based in other EU member states that are providing services to her Department. [15454]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The Department awards all contracts in line with the United Kingdom's objective of achieving value for money and in line with European Union Treaty obligations on transparency and free movement of goods and services.

Departmental Expenditure

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the annual expenditure was by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its agencies on (i) electricity and (ii) water and sewerage services in each year since 1997. [15389]

Jane Kennedy: Costs for the Department's London estate are shown in the tables.

£

	Electricity	*Water and sewerage*
1997–98	615,007	36,396
1998–99	614,783	33,614
1999–2000	634,859	32,607
2000–01	545,079	32,224
2001–02	579,102	29,009
2002–03	551,938	34,684
2003–04	572,782	29,372
2004–05	695,834	30,689

London staff of the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) occupy buildings where the utilities are included within the service charge. Figures for electricity costs only are available as shown in the tables.

£

	Electricity
1997–98	58,654
1998–99	53,124
1999–2000	48,124
2000–01	49,219
2001–02	53,689
2002–03	50,382
2003–04	57,855
2004–05	63,864

The National Health Service Purchasing and Supplies Authority (NHS PASA) became an agency of the Department in April 2000. Figures for the years following are shown in the tables.

£

	Electricity	*Water and sewerage*
2000–01	23,591	3,704
2001–02	32,901	2,576
2002–03	38,570	2,476
2003–04	30,122	2,292
2004–05	39,404	2,118

The activities of the NHS Pensions Agency transferred from the Department to the NHS with effect from 1 April 2004. Figures for previous years are shown in the table.

£

	Electricity	*Water and sewerage*
1997–98	60,554	26,237
1998–99	61,333	27,459
1999–2000	55,326	30,675
2000–01	50,678	13,542
2001–02	52,919	23,026
2002–03	46,787	24,218
2003–04	56,309	27,003

The NHS Estates Agency occupied rented office space in Leeds city centre, where its energy and water costs were included in the service charge.

Departmental Procurement

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether her Department's procurement policy includes timber used on and in the construction of departmental building projects; and if she will make a statement; [15297]

(2) if she will list her Department's refurbishment projects that *(a)* are in progress and *(b)* will start in the next six months; what action is being taken to ensure that these will procure timber from legal and sustainable sources; and if she will issue guidance to contractors on each of these projects to ensure that the timber used on-site during refurbishment also comes from legal and sustainable sources. [15298]

Jane Kennedy: Refurbishment of the Department's offices in Wellington House is the only current project and no further projects are planned for the next six months.

Instructions issued to building contractors as part of the contract documentation require that all timber and timber products are procured in accordance with current Government guidance and that the relevant documentary evidence is available.

Departmental Websites

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the websites that come under her Department's responsibility; what the cost was of each in the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to each site in that year. [15903]

Jane Kennedy: To identify the costs and the number of visitors to each agency and non-departmental public body website associated with the Department, which are not all directly operated by the Department, would incur disproportionate costs. However, the available information about the Department's corporate website and each of the Department's Executive agencies' websites is listed as follows.

Department of Health—www.dh.gov.uk.

The cost of the Department's corporate website and the sub domain sites listed below for the year 2004–05 was £724,956. These figures include hosting and maintenance, development and dedicated staff costs, using agreed civil service staff costs including salaries, common services, etc.

The total number of visits to the main Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk for the period April 2004 to March 2005 was 14,541,987 There were on average 720,326 unique users per month.

In addition to the main corporate website, the Department has a number of sub domain sites. The number of visits to these sites is shown in the table.

Sub domain name	*Number of visits (April 2004–March 2005)*
www.advisorybodies.doh.gov.uk	504,100
www.performance.doh.gov.uk	619,416
www.publications.doh.gov.uk	1,362,829
www.info.doh.gov.uk	2,607,266

The National Health Service Purchasing and Supply Agency (NHS PASA)—www.pasa.doh.gov.uk.

The NHS PASA was established on 1 April 2000.

The website received 406,000 visits between July 2004 and June 2005. The costs for this period were £86,000.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency—www.mhra.gov.uk.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) replaced the Medical Devices Agency and the Medicines Control Agency on 1 April 2003.

The website received 1,785,565 visits between July 2004 and June 2005. The MHRA is unable to isolate from overall information technology costs the cost for running the entire site. The cost per annum for the devices section of the site is £24,111 for hosting and £20,000 for staff costs. It is currently completing a major project to redevelop the MHRA website, which is due to be launched in the early autumn.

NHS Estates—www.nhsestates.gov.uk.

The NHS Estates website was created in September 2000. From July 2004 to June 2005 the total number of visitors was 251,317. The costs for this period were approximately £50,000.

Diagnostic Scans

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what percentage of diagnostic scans in the NHS she expects will be carried out by independent sector providers by 2008; [15143]

(2) pursuant to her oral answer of 12 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 684, on MRI scans, what factors were taken into consideration when determining that *(a)* an extra 900,000 MRI scans would be purchased by 2008 and *(b)* a quarter of scans on the NHS would be carried out by the independent sector. [15948]

Mr. Byrne: Strategic health authorities (SHAs) are planning for 10.6 per cent. of diagnostic scans, such as magnetic resonance imaging, computerised tomography and ultrasound, in the national health service to be carried out by independent sector (IS) providers by 2007–08. The commitments to expand diagnostics services in the NHS and the IS are based on the outcomes

of a departmental coordinated capacity planning exercise with all SHAs in order to reduce waiting times for patients and specifically to increase the diagnostic services required to meet the maximum 18 week waiting time target from referral to treatment promised in the Government's election manifesto.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many diagnostic scans were carried out in the Essex Health Authority area in each of the last five years. [15605]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data on the total number of diagnostic scans are not centrally available. Data are, however, collected on the number of imaging and radiodiagnostic examinations or tests. The latest data for 2003–04 are available on the Department's website at www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity.

Direct Payments

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many direct payments have been made in each year since their introduction, broken down by local authority. [15772]

Mr. Byrne: The following table shows the number of adults aged 18 and over receiving direct payments at some point during the year by councils with social services responsibilities (CSSRs) in England, for the years 2000–01 to 2003–04. Data for earlier years are not centrally available.

Number of clients receiving direct payments at some point during the year, 2000–01 to 2003–04[1]

Rounded numbers

CSSR	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
England[2]	5,000	6,300	9,600	17,000
Barking	10	10	20	30
Barnet	50	50	120	150
Barnsley	40	70	80	40
Bath	[3]	[3]	20	30
Bedfordshire	10	30	40	80
Bexley	10	10	20	40
Birmingham	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
Blackburn	0	10	30	40
Blackpool	10	10	40	50
Bolton	10	20	40	100
Bournemouth	50	20	30	40
Bracknell	[4]	[4]	[4]	20
Bradford	[3]	30	40	120
Brent	10	30	20	30
Brighton	10	20	50	50
Bristol	70	80	110	140
Bromley	10	10	10	[3]
Buckinghamshire	30	30	60	150
Bury	0	20	20	20
Calderdale	10	20	30	30
Cambridgeshire	30	80	150	230
Camden	20	40	90	140
Cheshire	60	100	140	250
City of London	0	0	0	[4]
Cornwall	40	50	70	460
Coventry	[3]	[3]	180	190
Croydon	20	50	80	140
Cumbria	50	80	150	170
Darlington	10	10	30	50
Derby	30	40	60	130
Derbyshire	70	100	160	220
Devon	[4]	60	90	130
Doncaster	[3]	0	50	80
Dorset	20	30	60	110
Dudley	10	10	10	50
Durham	30	90	160	260
Ealing	[4]	20	30	50

Number of clients receiving direct payments at some point during the year, 2000–01 to 2003–04[1]

Rounded numbers

CSSR	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
East Riding of Yorkshire	0	[4]	10	50
East Sussex	20	60	100	150
Enfield	10	20	30	70
Essex	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
Gateshead	20	30	40	70
Gloucestershire	50	80	100	190
Greenwich	70	90	110	170
Hackney	30	[3]	30	[3]
Halton	0	20	40	70
Hammersmith and Fulham	30	30	30	50
Hampshire	480	580	660	750
Haringey	0	0	50	80
Harrow	10	20	20	40
Hartlepool	[3]	[3]	10	20
Havering	0	0	[4]	10
Herefordshire	20	30	50	70
Hertfordshire	80	90	110	200
Hillingdon	830	20	90	100
Hounslow	[4]	[4]	30	80
Isle of Wight	10	10	30	60
Isle of Scilly	0	0	0	0
Islington	[4]	10	10	40
Kensington and Chelsea	20	20	30	40
Kent	40	60	80	310
Kingston upon Hull	[4]	10	10	60
Kingston upon Thames	70	70	80	90
Kirklees	10	30	110	160
Knowsley	10	10	20	50
Lambeth	20	40	60	80
Lancashire	10	40	200	340
Leicester	[4]	60	70	90
Leicestershire	60	60	90	130
Lewisham	30	30	30	40
Lincolnshire	[3]	[3]	70	160
Liverpool	30	50	70	100
Luton	[3]	[4]	20	40
Manchester	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
Medway	10	30	40	50
Merton	[4]	10	30	50
Middlesbrough	10	20	30	40
Milton Keynes	10	50	50	70
Newcastle upon Tyne	[3]	30	80	60
Newham	[4]	10	20	40
Norfolk	90	140	210	260
North East Lincolnshire	0	0	30	50
North Lincolnshire	10	10	20	20
North Somerset	20	20	40	60
North Tyneside	30	10	10	20
North Yorkshire	40	170	20	80
Northamptonshire	50	80	80	80
Northumberland	[4]	10	20	40
Nottingham	[3]	[3]	60	80
Nottinghamshire	80	100	170	370
Oldham	[4]	10	40	80
Oxfordshire	[3]	[3]	[3]	170
Peterborough	[4]	10	20	20
Plymouth	[4]	[4]	10	30
Poole	10	20	20	30
Portsmouth	100	90	90	110
Reading	[3]	[4]	10	20
Redbridge	[4]	40	30	50
Redcar	[4]	[4]	30	40
Richmond	20	30	40	70
Rochdale	[4]	20	20	40
Rotherham	[4]	20	20	40
Rutland	[4]	[4]	10	10
Salford	[3]	30	50	70
Sandwell	[4]	[4]	30	130
Sefton	10	30	30	100
Sheffield	0	60	80	100
Shropshire	[4]	70	80	140
Slough	[3]	0	[4]	10
Solihull	20	20	20	40
Somerset	120	150	190	270
South Gloucestershire	30	40	40	70
South Tyneside	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
Southampton	190	200	240	410
Southend	10	10	30	50
Southwark	[4]	30	30	50

Number of clients receiving direct payments at some point during the year, 2000–01 to 2003–04[1]

Rounded numbers

CSSR	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
St. Helens	0	10	20	70
Staffordshire	10	60	90	160
Stockport	0	0	40	90
Stockton on Tees	[4]—	10	30	60
Stoke on Trent	20	20	110	180
Suffolk	0	0	0	230
Sunderland	[4]—	10	10	170
Surrey	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Sutton	10	10	10	20
Swindon	10	40	40	40
Tameside	20	20	40	160
Telford	10	10	40	50
Thurrock	0	20	20	20
Torbay	[4]—	20	30	30
Tower Hamlets	[4]—	10	10	40
Trafford	50	30	10	70
Wakefield	0	10	20	60
Walsall	[3]—	10	20	30
Waltham Forest	90	70	60	70
Wandsworth	0	10	10	50
Warrington	[4]—	30	40	70
Warwickshire	80	90	130	150
West Berkshire	[4]—	10	10	30
West Sussex	[4]—	170	150	200
Westminster	40	30	50	60
Wigan	20	40	70	110
Wiltshire	80	70	100	170
Windsor	0	0	20	30
Wirral	0	20	40	130
Wokingham	0	[4]—	10	10
Wolverhampton	[4]—	10	10	20
Worcestershire	[3]—	30	60	280
York	10	[4]—	[4]—	30

[1] Data are for adults aged 18 and over.

[2] England figures contain estimated data.

[3] Less than six.

[4] Missing data.

Source:

RAP proforma P2f.

Drug Addicts (Hemel Hempstead)

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate her Department has made of the number of drug addicts in the Hemel Hempstead constituency; and how many are in a treatment programme. [16699]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has no estimate of number of drug addicts in the Hemel Hempstead constituency. Data is not collected as to the number of people receiving treatment for drug addiction within Hemel Hempstead. However, in 2003–04, the latest year for which data are available, there were 1,675 in structured drug treatments in Hertfordshire, of which Hemel Hempstead is a part.

Drug Treatment (Essex)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* residential and *(b)* in-patient specialist drug treatment rehabilitation places are available in Essex. [15613]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not held centrally in the format requested. However, establishments that provide residential and in-patient specialist drug treatment and rehabilitation are listed as follows:

Priory Treatment Centre—private facility—provides in-patient treatment and residential rehabilitation.

The Lea Ward Derwent Centre at Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow—provides in-patient treatment.

The Charles Bowles Institute at Westcliff-on Sea—provides in-patient treatment.

The Boleyn 1 Ward at Runwell Hosptial, Wickford—provides in-patient treatment.

Residential rehabilitation services are mostly provided on the basis of a national catchment area and receive clients from across the country. Therefore, Essex clients who are assessed as needing treatment may be sent to residential rehabilitation services in the east of England, or nationwide, according to their choice.

Drug Trials

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many random controlled drug trials her Department has undertaken in each of the last 10 years. [15382]

Jane Kennedy: The Department funds research to support policy and to provide the evidence needed to underpin quality improvement and service development in the national health service; and through the health technology assessment programme funds research into the effectiveness, appropriateness and cost of health treatment and prevention regimes. Over the last 10 years, research projects funded as part of these and other centrally funded programmes have included some 48 randomised controlled trials.

Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is devolved to and managed by NHS organisations. Details of individual projects, including those classified as randomised controlled trials, can be found on the national research register at www.dh.gov.uk/research.

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of patients whose health has been adversely affected because they received the placebo during controlled drug trials in each of the last 10 years. [15383]

Jane Kennedy: None. A placebo, in itself, would have no adverse effect and a national health service research ethics committee would be unlikely to approve a trial that denied participants the benefit of standard therapy that in doing so put them at greater than minimal risk.

E111 Scheme

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to reform the E111 scheme. [15051]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The E111 forms are in the process of being replaced by the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). Some member states started issuing EHICs from 1 June 2004. Others, including the United Kingdom, which had no existing card-issuing infrastructure, were given until 31 December 2005 to do so. The UK EHIC will be valid for use elsewhere in the European Economic Area from 1 September. Existing E111s will remain valid until 31 December 2005. There will be further publicity to inform the UK public.

East Midlands Ambulance Service

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if her Department will take steps to investigate the response times of the East Midlands Ambulance Service. [15018]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In line with our policy of "Shifting the Balance of Power", it is now for primary care trusts (PCTs,) in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders, to plan, develop and improve services for local people. Within the framework set out in the NHS Plan and other policy documents, PCTs, with their specialised knowledge of the local community, are effectively able to manage and improve local services.

Elderly Patients

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will establish an inquiry into the care of elderly inpatients in the NHS. [15600]

Mr. Byrne: We have no plans to establish an inquiry into the care of older inpatients. The next steps programme of the older people's national service framework is looking at improving the dignity and privacy of older patients. The project is jointly led at director level by the chief nursing officer and the director of care services and supported by the national clinical director for older people.

The independent Healthcare Commission scrutinises patient complaints and inspects the clinical governance arrangements that local national health service organisations have in place. All clinical staff are regulated by their appropriate independent licensing body, for example, the Nursing and Midwifery Council for nurses.

Energy Efficiency

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what targets she has on improving energy efficiency within her Department; and how she intends to achieve these targets. [15387]

Jane Kennedy: This Department supports and aims to meet the Government's strategy to reduce carbon emissions and improve the energy efficiency of the Government estate. The Department has rationalised and reduced the size of its estate and reduced energy consumption by 10 per cent. relative to 1999–2000.

The Department has an on-going policy to further improve our energy efficiency year on year. We therefore anticipate meeting the Framework target to reduce our carbon emissions by 12.5 per cent. by 2010–11, relative to 1999–2000.

English Wine

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will ensure that English wine is made available at dinners, receptions and parties she hosts at which hospitality involving wine is appropriate *(a)* during the EU presidency and *(b)* generally; and if she will make a statement. [9158]

Jane Kennedy: English wine will be provided at the dinner for the informal meeting of Health Ministers, as part of the United Kingdom Presidency. We are also working with the Council Secretariat to try to provide British produce, as key ingredients, and drink for all European Union (EU) council meetings during the Presidency.

All procurement is undertaken in line with the EU's procurement rules and to obtain value for money for the Department but where possible British products are used.

Food Supplements

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department plans to take to ensure companies that sell vitamin and mineral supplements know what products they will continue to be allowed to sell following implementation of the Food Supplements Directive; and if she will make a statement. [15534]

Caroline Flint: The Food Standards Agency has published a list on its website of substances which can continue to be used in food supplements after 1 August when the European Commission Food Supplements Directive applies. This information is available at www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/vitmin/supptable.

Freedom of Information

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many Freedom of Information Act 2000 requests have been answered by the Department; and in how many cases *(a)* information was wholly exempted, *(b)* information was partly exempted and *(c)* the requests were answered in full. [14968]

Jane Kennedy: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Solicitor-General on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2248W.

General Practitioners

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many registered national health service general practitioners there are in each London borough. [16219]

Jane Kennedy: The Department does not hold figures for the number of registered national health service general practitioners by London borough. However, the table shows the latest figures available for the number of general medical practitioners for London by strategic health authority (SHA) and primary care trust (PCT) as at 31 March 2005.

General medical practitioners (excluding retainers and registrars)[1] for London by SHA and PCT, as at 31 March 2005

		Numbers (headcount)
	England	32,194
	London	4,821
Q05	*North Central London SHA*	807
5A9	Barnet PCT	235
5K7	Camden PCT	136
5C1	Enfield PCT	167
5C9	Haringey Teaching PCT	141
5K8	Islington PCT	128
Q06	*North East London SHA*	935
5C2	Barking and Dagenham PCT	82
5C3	City and Hackney PCT	165

General medical practitioners (excluding retainers and registrars)[1] for London by SHA and PCT, as at 31 March 2005

		Numbers (headcount)
5A4	Havering PCT	122
5C5	Newham PCT	161
5NA	Redbridge PCT	126
5C4	Tower Hamlets PCT	134
5NC	Waltham Forest PCT	145
Q04	*North West London SHA*	1,174
5K5	Brent PCT	201
5HX	Ealing PCT	194
5H1	Hammersmith and Fulham PCT	107
5K6	Harrow PCT	144
5AT	Hillingdon PCT	141
5HY	Hounslow PCT	135
5LA	Kensington and Chelsea PCT	108
5LC	Westminster PCT	144
Q07	*South East London SHA*	1,024
TAK	Bexley Care Trust	129
5A7	Bromley PCT	203
5A8	Greenwich PCT	132
5LD	Lambeth PCT	212
5LF	Lewisham PCT	170
5LE	Southwark PCT	178
Q08	*South West London SHA*	881
5K9	Croydon PCT	222
5A5	Kingston PCT	108
5M6	Richmond and Twickenham PCT	121
5M7	Sutton and Merton PCT	240
5LG	Wandsworth PCT	190

[1] General medical practitioners (excluding retainers and registrars) includes contracted GPs, general medical service (CMS) others and personal medical service (PMS) others. Prior to September 2004, this group included CMS unrestricted principals, PMS contracted GPs, PMS salaried GPs, restricted principals, assistants, salaried doctors (Para 52 SFA), PMS other, flexible career scheme GPs and GP returners.

Source:

NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre CMS and PMS statistics.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioners there are in *(a)* Castle Point and *(b)* Canvey Island; and what estimate she has made of the likely number of retirements over the next five years. [15602]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of general practitioners in the Castle Point and Rochford Primary Care Trust (PCT) area, of which Castle Point and Canvey Island are a part, who are aged 50 and over is shown in the table. Information is not held centrally as to the likely numbers of GPs retiring in the next five years. As part of the new GP contract, there is no upper age limit at which GPs have to retire—it is a personal choice.

Number of GPs in Castle Point and Rochford Primary Care Trust

	numbers (headcount)
General medical practitioners[1]	93
of which:	
50 to 54	17
55 to 59	18
60 to 64	10
65 to 69	5
70 and over	0

[1] Excluding retainers and registrars.

Note:

General medical practitioners (excluding retainers and registrars) includes contracted GPs, general medical service (GMS) others and personal medical service (PMS) others. Prior to September 2004, this group included GMS unrestricted principals, PMS contracted GPs, PMS salaried GPs, restricted principals, assistants, salaried doctors (Para 52 SFA), PMS other, flexible career scheme GPs and GP returners.

Source:

National Health Service Health and Social Care Information Centre GMS and PMS statistics.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many GP appointments were missed by patients in *(a)* Suffolk, *(b)* West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust, *(c)* West Suffolk Primary Care Trust and *(d)* Central Suffolk Primary Care Trust in each of the last five years. [15129]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many people *(a)* requested and *(b)* received an appointment to see a general practitioner within 48 hours in the Castle Point and Rochford Primary Care Trust in the last 12 months; [15607]

(2) what the average waiting time was for an appointment to see a general practitioner *(a)* in the Castle Point and Rochford Primary Care Trust and *(b)* for Canvey Island general practitioners in the last period for which figures are available. [15608]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not collected in the format requested and the information that is collected centrally cannot be disaggregated to practices as each practice is anonymised within the primary care access survey.

The latest figures available, for August 2005, show 100 per cent. of patients able to be offered a general practitioner consultation within two working days within the Castle Point and Rochford Primary Care Trust area, of which Canvey Island is a part.

Glutaraldehyde

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment has been made of *(a)* the extent to which Glutaraldehyde is used in the cleaning of medical equipment in the NHS, *(b)* the take-up of alternative sterilising agents and *(c)* the number of healthcare workers that have health problems as a result of exposure to Glutaraldehyde. [15722]

Jane Kennedy: The Health and Safety Executive further reduced the occupational exposure limit for Glutaraldehyde in December 2001. This led to a number of Glutaraldehyde-based products being withdrawn from the market and to national health service organisations using alternative chemical disinfectants and sterilizing agents.

Information regarding the extent to which Glutaraldehyde is used for the cleaning of medical equipment in the NHS and the take-up of alternative sterilizing agents is not collected centrally. It is the responsibility of each NHS organisation's occupational health department to record any incidents of healthcare workers developing health problems resulting from

exposure to Glutaraldehyde. Information is not collected centrally by the Department relating to exposure to Glutaraldehyde.

Green Minister

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what work her Department's Green Minister has undertaken in the last three months; and what meetings the Minister has attended in the last 12 months, in that capacity; [15432]

(2) if she will list the meetings at which her Department has been represented regarding the delivery of sustainable development across Government as co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-committee of Green Ministers. [15433]

Caroline Flint: Following the General Election in May 2005, the Cabinet Sub-Committee of Green Ministers (ENV(G)) was replaced by the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Sustainable Development in Government (EE(SD)), the members of which are departmental sustainable development Ministers.

I was appointed as departmental sustainable development Minister in June 2005.

The Department has been represented regarding the delivery of sustainable development across Government. Although the Government publishes the title, membership and terms of reference of cabinet committees, it has been the practice of successive governments not to disclose details of their proceedings.

Aside from this, departmental officials are participating in the work of the various committees supporting the EE(SD):

The Sustainable Operations Board and its supporting working group.

The Sustainable Development Programme Board and its supporting working group.

Gynaecologists

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many registered national health service gynaecologists there are in each London borough. [16218]

Jane Kennedy: The Department does not hold this information in the format requested. However, the table shows the latest figures for the number of medical staff with a speciality in obstetrics and gynaecology within London government office region (GOR) by strategic health authority (SHA) as at 30 September 2004.

Hospital, public health medicine and community health services: medical staff with a specialty in obstetrics and gynaecology within London GOR by SHA as at 30 September 2004

Numbers

		Number	*Full-time equivalent*
London GOR		969	875
North central London	Q05	200	174
North east London	Q06	174	167
North west London	Q04	252	216
South east London	Q07	207	193
South west London	Q08	136	125

Source:
NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre medical and dental workforce census

Hazardous Waste Regulations

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the cost to the NHS of implementation of the Hazardous Waste Regulations 2005. [15710]

Jane Kennedy: The cost to the national health service in England of implementing the Hazardous Waste Regulations 2005 is estimated to be an additional £6 million per annum.

It is expected that the NHS in England can contain increased costs by improved training, management and segregation practices. Further guidance is being produced by the Department of Health in conjunction with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Environment Agency and the Health and Safety Executive to assist waste producers, such as the NHS, to understand the new regulations and to manage and dispose of healthcare waste more effectively.

Head Lice

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of head lice in school children in London there were in each year since 1997. [15439]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not collected.

Health Bodies (Interim Appraisals)

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment has been made of the merits of mutual recognition of Scottish Medicines Consortium, All Wales Medicines Strategy Group and National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence assessments for the purpose of interim appraisals pending full appraisals; and if she will make a statement. [15713]

Jane Kennedy: Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC) and All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG) assessments are not directly comparable with National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence technology appraisals. Primary care trusts are responsible for the managed introduction of new technologies and in doing so, they should take account of the available evidence. This may include material from the SMC and AWMSG where this is available.

Health Care Commission

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of progress by the Health Care Commission (HCC) on dealing with complaints; and what estimate she has made of whether the HCC has adequate resources to deal with the complaints it has received. [15543]

Jane Kennedy: I understand from the chair of the Healthcare Commission that it has received an unprecedented number of requests for independent review in its first year, having received over 8,000 cases compared to 3,500 received for the same period last year, under the previous system. This has initially meant some delays in handling cases. However, the Healthcare Commission has increased its staffing levels and has refined its processes to improve the way it handles second stage national health service complaints. As a

result of this, the number of complaints resolved each month has increased from 117 in February 2005 to 911 in August 2005 with a total of 4,800 reviews being carried out in the first year.

The Healthcare Commission is working with the health service Ombudsman and the NHS to improve the handling of NHS complaints at local level, through training and support as well as through ratings and assessment work.

Health Tourism

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department has taken to combat health tourism; what assessment she has made of the impact of these measures; and what further measures she plans to introduce. [15380]

Jane Kennedy: The national health service exists primarily for the benefit of people who live here lawfully. Arrangements have been in place since 1982 to charge anyone who is not ordinarily resident here for any NHS hospital treatment received. The current rules are set out in the NHS (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations 1989, as amended. The Department conducted a wide-ranging review of the operation of the hospital charging regime during 2002–03. This identified loopholes and implementation difficulties arising from changes in travel and migration patterns since the 1989 regulations were first introduced. Amendment regulations, to close the loopholes and make the regulations easier to operate, came into force in April 2004. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the hospital charging regime is being operated more effectively since that time. No further changes are currently planned.

For primary medical services, a public consultation was carried out last year on proposals to change the rules on access to general practitioner services in order to clarify them and align them as closely as possible with those for secondary care. We are currently considering the response to the consultation with a view to deciding the best way forward.

Hip Replacements (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time for a hip replacement was in the Castle Point and Rochford Primary Care Trust in each of the last five years. [15599]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of elective finished in-year admissions for hip replacement surgery (waiting list and booked cases) for residents within the Castle Point and Rochford Primary Care Trust area are shown in the table.

days

	Median waiting time
1999–2000	242
2000–01	278
2001–02	323
2002–03	300
2003–04	273

Notes:

1. A finished in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one health care provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the datayear. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

2. The main operation is the first recorded operation in the hospital episode statistics (HES) data set and is usually the most resource intensive procedure performed during the episode. It is appropriate to use main operation when looking at admission details, eg. time waited, but the figures for "all operations count of episodes" give a more complete count of episodes with an operation.

3. Time waited statistics from HES are not the same as the published waiting list statistics. HES provides counts and time waited for all patients admitted to hospital within a given period whereas the published waiting list statistics count those waiting for treatment on a specific date and how long they have been on the waiting list. Also, HES calculates the time waited as the difference between the admission and decision to admit dates. Unlike published waiting list statistics, this is not adjusted for self-deferrals or periods of medical/social suspension.

4. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data is ungrossed).

Source:

HES, health and social care.

Hospital Services (Reconfiguration)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Minister of State, during her visit to Hammersmith hospital on 20 July, held discussions regarding *(a)* reconfiguration of hospital services in the Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust and *(b)* the transfer of specialised services from the Charing Cross hospital. [16086]

Jane Kennedy: No formal discussions were held by the Minister of State, about the issues raised in this question, during her visit to Hammersmith hospital on 20 July 2005.

Human Genetics, Fertility and Tissue Commission

Paul Rowen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she intends to follow the recommendations of the Select Committee on Science and Technology's Fifth Report and create a new Human Genetics, Fertility and Tissue Commission. [15282]

Jane Kennedy: The Government published their response to the report from the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee, "Human Reproductive Technologies and the Law", on 16 August 2005. Copies are available in the Library.

The Government considered whether to establish a single commission with a remit covering the entirety of bioethics issues as part of the Department's review of its arm's length bodies. This was rejected, after careful consideration, on the basis that the present distributed model of advisory bodies with more specific briefs remained the best option as it enables specific bioethical issues to be addressed by dedicated groups with the appropriate expertise and sufficient time to devote to the issue.

Independent Living (State Assistance)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people received state assistance to live independently in their own homes in each year since 1997. [15775]

Mr. Byrne: The table shows the number of people aged 18 and over receiving community based services as at 31 March for the years 2001–04 in England and the number from these totals who received direct payments. Data are not available for the earlier years.

Number of people receiving community based services[1] at 31 March, 2001–04, England

At 31 March	Total[2]	Number of whom received direct payments
2001	941,200	4,000
2002	968,400	5,300
2003[3]	982,100	8,600
2004[3]	994,400	14,000

[1] Community based services includes day care, meals, respite care, direct payments, professional support, transport and equipment as well as home care.
[2] Adults aged 18 and over.
[3] Data include clients formerly in receipt of preserved rights.
Note:
Figures may not sum due to rounding.
Source:
RAP proforma P2a, KS1.

London Health Authorities (Financial Position)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the latest financial position is of each *(a)* London health authority and *(b)* London primary care trust. [16037]

Jane Kennedy: The 2004–05 financial positions of each London strategic health authority (SHA) and London primary care trust (PCT) are shown in the tables.

2004–05 financial position of London SHAs

£000

SHA	Final surplus/deficit
North Central London	22,498
North East London	11,874
North West London	5,977
South East London	11,009
South West London	9,639
Total surplus/deficit	60,997

Note:
2004–05 data must be treated as provisional until signed off by the National Audit Office/Chief Executive.
Source:
Audited summarisation schedules 2004–05.

2004–05 financial position of London PCTs

£000

PCT	Final surplus/deficit
Barking and Dagenham	263
Barnet	591
Bexley Care Trust	-2,749
Brent Teaching	750
Bromley	35
Camden	114
City and Hackney Teaching	43
Croydon	116

2004–05 financial position of London PCTs

£000

PCT	Final surplus/deficit
Ealing	12
Enfield	103
Greenwich Teaching	132
Hammersmith and Fulham	679
Haringey Teaching	1
Harrow	-969
Havering	-3,258
Hillingdon	-13,470
Hounslow	-6,171
Islington	20
Kensington and Chelsea	-17,976
Kingston	-1,853
Lambeth	713
Lewisham	193
Newham	279
Redbridge	82
Richmond and Twickenham	117
Southwark	146
Sutton and Merton	0
Tower Hamlets	493
Waltham Forest	-2,538
Wandsworth	-8,237
Westminster	13
Total surplus/deficits	-52,326

Note:
2004–05 data must be treated as provisional until signed off by the National Audit Office/Chief Executive.
Source:
Audited summarisation schedules 2004–05.

Maternity Services

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the range and adequacy of maternity services in London; and if she will make a statement. [15824]

Jane Kennedy: No such assessment has been made. It is for the local national health service to make assessments about the range and adequacy of health services it provides to the local community, including maternity services.

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action is being taken to increase short-term capacity for maternity deliveries in hospitals in the South West London Strategic Health Authority area. [15594]

Jane Kennedy: This is a matter for local decision making which should take full account of local circumstances. I have been informed that the South West London Strategic Health Authority (SHA) is actively working to develop and improve maternity services in its area. In August 2004, the SHA commissioned a two-year modernisation of maternity services project and has recently been successful in securing departmental funding of £250,000 to develop a South West London maternity collaborative to build on the work undertaken by this project.

Medical Students

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will take steps to expand the number of places for graduate fast-track medical students; and if she will make a statement. [15875]

Mr. Byrne: The Department and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) will be looking at the case for further expansion of undergraduate medical education, including the potential for expansion of graduate entry medical degrees. A joint implementation group, chaired by the Chief Medical Officer, Sir Liam Donaldson, and the Chief Executive of HEFCE, Sir Howard Newby, has been established to lead this review.

Medicine Disposal Costs

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the cost to the NHS of the disposal of patients' regular prescribed medication when they are admitted to hospital. [15732]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mental Health

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the cost of providing mental health services for adults who have previously been in care in the last year for which figures are available. [15712]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not centrally available.

Mifepristone

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information she has received regarding adverse effects associated with mifepristone; what discussions *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in her Department have had with (i) the United States Food and Drug Administration about mifepristone and (ii) the manufacturers of mifepristone about possible adverse effects of the drug; and if she will make a statement. [16242]

Jane Kennedy: Mifepristone (Mifegyne) is an antiprogestogenic steroid that is licensed for the medical termination of intra-uterine pregnancy of up to nine weeks, for softening and dilating the cervix prior to mechanical termination of pregnancy and, in combination with gemeprost, for terminating pregnancies of 13–20 weeks gestation.

The United Kingdom Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) receive reports of suspected adverse drug reactions to medicinal products via the yellow card scheme. Since marketing authorisation for mifepristone was first granted in 1991, the MHRA and CSM have received 47 reports of 79 suspected adverse drug reactions in association with its use. The reporting of a suspected adverse drug reaction does not necessarily mean that the drug was responsible for that event. Many factors, such as the medical condition that is being treated, other pre-existing illnesses or other medications may play a contributing role.

The MHRA has carefully evaluated the yellow card reports of suspected adverse reactions associated with the use of Mifegyne use in the UK and has concluded that they do not affect the balance of risks and benefits of mifepristone and that the safety profile of this medicine is adequately described in the summary of product characteristics provided to health professionals and in the patient information leaflet.

The MHRA is aware of recent regulatory action taken in the United States (US) following reports of suspected adverse drug reactions in association with the use of mifepristone in a manner that is not consistent with the approved labelling. However, serious adverse reactions associated with mifepristone have been recently reviewed by the regulatory authorities within Europe and an expert group of the CSM advised that since birth, menstruation and abortion create conditions that are conducive to an increased risk of infection there was currently insufficient data to warrant regulatory action. There has been no contact with the Food and Drug Administration or the manufacturer on this specific issue.

The manufacturer has a legal obligation to provide the MHRA with reports of serious adverse reactions to mifepristone within 15 days of their receipt, including the US/irrespective of the country of origin. Similarly, reports received by the MHRA are sent to the manufacturer within 15 days of receipt. This ensures that both the MHRA and the manufacturer have access to all the available information with which to monitor the safety of mifepristone.

As with all marketed medicines, the MHRA will continue to monitor the safety of mifepristone and will take any action to ensure patient safety is maintained.

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures are in place to ensure that National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence decisions are sufficiently resourced to ensure rapid uptake of recommendations. [15714]

Jane Kennedy: Provision is made within national health service allocations for the estimated impact on the NHS of guidance from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence.

Neonatal Care (Essex)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding has been made available for neonatal care in the Essex Health Authority area in each of the last five years. [15610]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally. It is up to local national health service organisations to identify local priorities and decide on the distribution of their overall funding allocation across the range of services to be provided in the context of local need.

NHS (Spare Capacity)

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has commissioned to assess the amount of spare capacity within the NHS. [15142]

Mr. Byrne: Capacity requirements are assessed by each strategic health authority as part of its local delivery planning responsibilities. The Department has not commissioned specific research in this area but encouraged the necessary increase in capacity to improve patient access to services and reduce waiting periods.

NHS Consultants

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many consultant posts were vacant in the NHS in England on 31 March in each of the past five years; and what assessment she has made of *(a)* trends in levels of and *(b)* reasons for consultant vacancies. [12946]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the number and rate of vacancies for consultants lasting three months or more in each of the last five years is shown in the table.

The recent fall in vacancy rates consolidates last year's downward trend and comes at the same time as a considerable increase in consultants. There are 9,389, or 44 per cent. more consultants employed in the national health service than there were in 1997. Overall, the picture is one of growth and reducing vacancies.

Three month vacancy rate and number for all consultants in England as at 31 March 2000–05

	Three month vacancy rate percentage	Three month vacancy number	Staff in post (full-time equivalent)	Staff in post (headcount)
2005	3.3	973	28,822	31,210
2004	4.4	1,255	27,564	30,176
2003	4.7	1,264	25,434	27,775
2002	3.8	946	23,713	25,816
2001	3.0	672	21,626	23,716
2000	2.8	596	20,830	22,627

Notes:

1. Three month vacancies are vacancies which trusts are actively trying to fill, which had lasted for three months or more (full-time equivalents).
2. Three month vacancy rates are three month vacancies expressed as a percentage of three month vacancies plus staff in post.
3. Vacancy and staff in post numbers are rounded to the nearest whole number.
4. Percentages are rounded to one decimal place.
5. * where the sum of the staff in post and number of vacancies is less then 10.
6. — where the sum of the staff in post and number of vacancies is zero.

Source:

Department of Health medical and dental vacancy survey.

Nurses

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many registered national health service nurses there are in each London borough; [16216]

(2) how many registered national health service midwives there are in each London borough; [16217]

(3) how many registered national health service psychiatric nurses there are in each London borough. [16331]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is collected as total qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff in London government office region (GOR) by strategic health authority (SHA). The table shows the latest figures available as at 30 September 2004.

National health service hospital and community health services: total qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff in London GOR by SHA area as at 30 September 2004

Headcount

	Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff	Of which: Midwives	Psychiatry
London GOR Total	65,333	3,950	10,266
North Central London SHA	13,115	689	1,681
North East London SHA	12,067	927	1,787
North West London SHA	15,774	844	2,756
South East London SHA	14,136	861	3,216
South West London SHA	10,241	629	826

Source:

Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census 2004.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many nurses are employed in the Essex Health Authority area on *(a)* permanent and *(b)* temporary contracts. [15601]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of nurses in the Essex Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area is not available in the format requested. However, the table shows the number of qualified nurses in the Essex SHA area and the number of bank nurses.

National health service hospital and community health services: total qualified nurses in the Essex SHA area by organisation by nature of contract as at 30 September 2004

headcount

		Total qualified nurses	of which Bank nurses
Essex SHA total		8,926	934
Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	RDD	1,138	258
Basildon PCT	5GR	122	0
Billericay, Brentwood and Wickford PCT	5GP	118	0
Castle Point and Rochford PCT	5JP	152	6
Chelmsford PCT	5JN	108	0
Colchester PCT	5GM	293	8
Epping Forest PCT	5AJ	140	6
Essex Ambulance Service NHS Trust	RB4	1	0
Essex Rivers Healthcare NHS Trust	RDE	1,092	0
Essex SHA	Q03	10	0
Harlow PCT	5DC	115	11
Maldon and South Chelmsford PCT	5GL	142	0
Mid Essex Hospital Services NHS Trust	RQ8	1,454	295
North Essex Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust	RRD	746	64
Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust	RQW	739	46
South Essex Partnership NHS Trust	RWN	641	149
Southend Hospital NHS Trust	RAJ	1,119	49
Southend on Sea PCT	5AK	193	19
Tendring PCT	5AH	196	20
Thurrock PCT	5GQ	145	0
Uttlesford PCT	5GN	83	4
Witham Braintree and Halstead Care Trust	TAG	179	19

Source:

Health and Social Care Information Centre non-medical workforce census 2004

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many full-time equivalent nursing vacancies there are in the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire strategic health authority. [16615]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of nursing vacancies in the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire strategic health authority area are shown in the following table. All vacancy rates are calculated on full-time equivalent vacancy numbers.

Health and social care information centre vacancies survey March 2005. National health service three month vacancies in the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire strategic health authority area by organisation for qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff. Three month vacancy rates, numbers and staff in post.

		March 2005		September 2004	
		Three month vacancy rate (percentage)	*Three month vacancy number*	*(Staff in post) full-time equivalent*	*(Staff in post) headcount*
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire strategic health authority area total	Q02	5.0	368	7,064	9,955
Bedford hospitals NHS trust	RC1	1.5	11	702	1,156
Bedford PCT	5GD	0.0	0	156	203
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire ambulance and paramedic service NHS trust	RFU	[—]	0	0	0
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire SHA	Q02	[—]	0	0	0
Bedfordshire and Luton community NHS trust	RV7	13.3	75	488	591
Bedfordshire Heartlands PCT	5GE	3.0	6	202	269
Dacorum PCT	5GW	2.8	3	113	168
East and North Hertfordshire NHS trust	RWH	4.0	58	1,410	2,557
Hertfordshire Partnership NHS trust	RWR	7.7	70	834	974
Hertsmere PCT	5CP	0.0	0	94	119
Luton and Dunstable hospital NHS trust	RC9	0.1	1	819	1,021
Luton PCT	5GC	9.3	19	182	238
North Hertfordshire and Stevenage PCT	5GH	1.3	3	201	274
Royston, Buntingford and Bishop's Stortford PCT	5GK	1.0	1	95	118
South East Hertfordshire PCT	5GJ	1.9	3	132	204
St. Albans and Harpenden PCT	5GX	0.3	0	124	163
Watford and Three Rivers PCT	5GV	7.3	9	116	145
Welwyn Hatfield PCT	5GG	7.3	6	76	108
West Hertfordshire hospitals NHS trust	RWG	7.3	103	1,321	1,647

[—] = zero.

Notes:

Three month vacancy:

1. Three month vacancy information is as at 31 March 2005.
2. Three month vacancies are vacancies which trusts are actively trying to fill, which had lasted for three months or more (full-time equivalents).
3. Three month vacancy rates are three month vacancies expressed as a percentage of three month vacancies plus staff in post.
4. Three month vacancy rates are calculated using staff in post from the non-medical workforce census September 2004.
5. Percentages are rounded to one decimal place.

Staff in post:

6. Staff in post data is from the non-medical workforce census September 2004.

General:

7. Vacancy and staff in post numbers are rounded to the nearest whole number.
8. Calculating the vacancy rates using the above data may not equal the actual vacancy rates.
9. Due to rounding, totals may not equal the sum of component parts.
10. Strategic health authority figures are based on trusts, and do not necessarily reflect the geographical provision of healthcare.

Sources:

Health and Social Care Information Centre Vacancies Survey March 2005
Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census September 2004

Ophthalmic Medical Practitioners/Opticians

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many registered national health service ophthalmic medical practitioners there are in each London borough. [16215]

Jane Kennedy: This information is not available in the format requested.

However, the table shows the number of ophthalmic opticians holding national health service contracts in primary care trusts (PCTs) in Greater London, at the end of year 2003. Ophthalmic opticians may hold contracts in more than one PCT; therefore the data shown in the table is not comparable.

Ophthalmic opticians holding NHS contracts in PCTs in Greater London, at end of year 2003

PCT	*Number*
Barking and Dagenham	4
Havering	8
Barnet	11
Bexley	0
Greenwich Teaching	21
Brent Teaching	5
Harrow	4
Bromley	38
Camden	4
Islington	8
Croydon	16
Ealing	12
Hammersmith and Fulham	3
Hounslow	9

Ophthalmic opticians holding NHS contracts in PCTs in Greater London, at end of year 2003

PCT	Number
Newham	16
City and Hackney	6
Tower Hamlets	8
Enfield	8
Haringey	1
Hillingdon	9
Kensington and Chelsea	2
Westminster	5
Kingston	23
Richmond and Twickenham	7
Lambeth	8
Lewisham	12
Southwark	16
Sutton and Merton	64
Wandsworth	6
Redbridge	15
Waltham Forest	16

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many ophthalmic opticians there were in each London health authority in each year since 1997. [15839]

Jane Kennedy: This information is not available in the format requested.

Out-of-hours Care (Essex)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total cost was to the Castle Point and Rochford Primary Care Trust of providing out-of-hours care to patients in each of the last five years. [15611]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Castle Point and Rochford Primary Care Trust (PCT) was established on 1 April 2002. Therefore, data can be provided only for two years. Data for 2004–05 are not yet available.

The total cost of providing out-of-hours care to patients was £189,000 in 2002–03 and £247,000 in 2003–04[1].

We expect PCTs to fund out-of-hours services through their general funding allocations. In 2005–06, Castle Point and Rochford PCT received £157 million. In 2006–07, it will receive £188 million.

[1] *Source:*
Castle Point and Rochford PCT financial returns, 2002–03 and 2003–04.

Overseas Nurses

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to monitor the number of overseas nurses employed by the NHS in England. [14179]

Mr. Byrne: The Nursing and Midwifery Council's data on international registrations of nurses provides information on the level of international recruitment in the United Kingdom. Figures for 2004–05 show a fall of 19 per cent. in the number of international registrations from the previous year. The Department has no plans to collect other data on the number of overseas nurses employed in England.

Peterborough and Stamford NHS Foundation Trust

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the financial deficit was for the Peterborough and Stamford NHS Foundation Trust for the last financial year. [15091]

Mr. Byrne: This is a matter for the chair of the Peterborough and Stamford National Health Service Foundation Trust. I have written to the chair, Dr. Clive Morton, informing him of the hon. Member's inquiry.

Physiotherapists

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many registered national health service physiotherapists there are in each London borough. [16332]

Jane Kennedy: The Department does not collect figures for the number of national health service physiotherapists by London borough. However, the table shows the latest figures available for the number of physiotherapists in the London government office region (GOR) by strategic health authority (SHA) area as at 30 September 2004.

National health service hospital and community health services: total physiotherapists in London GOR by SHA area as at 30 September 2004

	Headcount
London GOR	2,630
North Central London SHA	524
North East London SHA	464
North West London SHA	614
South East London SHA	553
South West London SHA	475

Source:
Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census 2004

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many junior physiotherapy posts were *(a)* established and *(b)* staffed in the NHS in Essex in the last 12 months. [15615]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the NHS trusts which have vacancy freezes affecting physiotherapy posts, broken down by strategic health authority. [14176]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not collect this information.

Pregnancy Termination

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses suffering (i) stress and (ii) other mental health problems as a result of their taking part in termination of pregnancy operations in each year since 1975; and what estimate she has made of the related cost to the national health service. [15629]

Caroline Flint: The Government do not hold information centrally on the reasons for sickness absence by doctors and nurses.

Section 4 of the Abortion Act 1967, as amended, states that, except where treatment is necessary to save the life of, or prevent grave permanent injury to the pregnant woman, "no person shall be under any duty, whether by contract or by any statutory or other legal requirement, to participate in any treatment authorised by this Act to which he has a conscientious objection".

Pressure Sores

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether targets for pressure sore reduction were met in the last financial year. [15203]

Mr. Byrne: There are no targets for the reduction of pressure sores. Reducing the incidence of pressure sores in hospitals is tackled locally through clinical governance; a programme of continuous improvement in clinical care. The toolkit, "Essence of Care—patient focused benchmarks for clinical governance", includes a chapter specific to pressure ulcers.

This is underpinned by National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidelines that also focus on screening and assessment, informing patients and their carers, the development and implementation of an individualised plan for prevention and treatment to be agreed and delivered by a multidisciplinary team working with patients and their carers.

Private Treatment

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS patients have paid privately for some portion of their diagnosis or treatment since 2000. [15876]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not centrally available.

Recycling

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what percentage of copying paper used by her Department in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained; [15459]

(2) what measures she has put in place to ensure that her Department meets the targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all copying paper brought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content; [15461]

(3) by what date her Department expects to implement in full the targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper brought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications brought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste; [15464]

(4) if she will list her Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports, in each case stating (i) the name of each paper used and (ii) the recycled (and post-consumer recycled) content of each paper. [15465]

Jane Kennedy: The Department's contracted supplier for all copier paper, bulk stationery and envelopes is Office Depot. The vast majority of white paper purchased is Niceday 3500, which is 80 grams per square metre, 100 per cent. recycled using 80 per cent. post consumer waste.

Bulk paper copying is carried out on Xerox 'x3' brand paper. This is 100 per cent. post consumer waste recycled. This exceeds the target set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs of a minimum of 75 per cent. post consumer waste.

In 2003–04, 85 per cent. of the copying paper used in the Department was from recycled sources. In 2004–05, this proportion had increased to 96.5 per cent.

For parliamentary work, carried out by Central Office of Information (COI), for example, Command Papers, Acts and other departmental papers, the minimum recycled fibre content required is 75 per cent. for coated and 100 per cent. for uncoated papers, virgin fibre pulp being elemental chlorine free or preferably totally chlorine free. Mill broke is not included in the recycled fibre content. Applying the National Association of Paper Merchants definition for recycled content, the recycled fibre can include converters waste, printers waste and post consumer waste from homes and offices.

For all other printed publications, the selection of paper stock is based on the most cost-effective quotation that represents value for money use of public funds. As such, the actual brand of recycled and environmentally friendly paper and its specifications rests with the COI and the Department is unable to make a detailed statement on the information requested.

Registered Nursing Care Contributions

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients received registered nursing care contributions in each year since the payment was introduced, broken down by area. [15773]

Mr. Byrne: In October 2001, the Government delivered on time the commitment given in the NHS Plan to introduce national health service-funded nursing care, for those self funding their care, in a care home providing nursing care who had previously paid for the care they needed from a registered nurse. From April 2003, all residents of care homes providing nursing care, including those placed by local authorities, have received NHS funding of their nursing care, rather than that element of their care being provided by the local council and subject to a means test.

The numbers of people receiving free NHS nursing care are shown in the table.

Strategic health authority	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	3,694	6,894	6,421
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	783	3,864	1,474
Birmingham and the Black Country	1,763	4,551	4,631
Cheshire and Merseyside	2,651	7,963	15,740
County Durham and Tees Valley	2,739	3,804	3,286
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	1,824	3,567	3,795
Cumbria and Lancashire	2,276	3,807	3,343
Essex	432	1,445	1,730
Greater Manchester	2,875	6,065	6,032

Strategic health authority	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	2,286	4,046	4,085
Kent and Medway	2,288	2,755	2,796
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	1,236	2,254	1,975
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	1,952	4,382	4,391
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	3,012	4,688	5,413
North Central London	606	1,484	1,936
North East London	1,623	2,402	2,181
North West London	733	2,131	1,967
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	1,293	3,796	3,418
Shropshire and Staffordshire	1,498	3,778	4,443
Somerset and Dorset	2,058	3,905	3,829
South East London	1,361	3,006	4,129
South West London	1,790	3,187	2,987
South West Peninsula	1,914	4,405	4,368
South Yorkshire	1,510	3,639	3,340
Surrey and Sussex	6,157	9,183	9,389
Thames Valley	2,343	4,095	4,818
Trent	4,169	7,206	7,244
West Yorkshire	1,885	6,716	6,412
Total England	58,751	119,018	125,573

Note:
The data show a count of the number of people benefiting from NHS-funded nursing care at the end of each year for which data were collected.
Source:
Local delivery plan returns.

Renewable Energy

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of electricity used by buildings in *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its agencies came from renewable sources in each year since 1997. [15388]

Jane Kennedy: The proportion of energy purchased that comes from renewable sources for the Department's main London estate is shown in the table.

	Percentage
1997–98	0
1998–99	0
1999–2000	0
2000–01	0
2001–02	43
2002–03	76
2003–04	61
2004–05	100

The proportion of energy purchased from renewable sources for the National Health Service Purchasing and Supplies Agency (NHS PASA) is shown in the table.

	Percentage
2000–01	0
2001–02	43.4
2002–03	99
2003–04	99
2004–05	84

Note:
NHS PASA came into existence as a departmental agency in April 2000.

Solpaflex

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when the drug Solpaflex became available on national health service prescription; and if she will make a statement; [15492]

(2) what information she has received on the number of persons prescribed the drug Solpaflex on national health service prescription; and if she will make a statement. [15493]

Jane Kennedy: Solpaflex, in both tablet and gel forms, was first licensed for use in the United Kingdom in 1996, when it was first dispensed on prescription in the community, in England. The licence for the gel form expired in 2001, when the product ceased to be prescribed. The tablet form is still licensed and can be prescribed.

The Department does not hold data on the number of people who receive a particular drug. However, since 1996, Prescription Pricing Authority data show small numbers of prescriptions for Solpaflex, in both forms, in any one year, have never exceeded 400.

Special Care Baby Units (Essex)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many babies had to be moved between hospitals to access a special care baby unit in the Essex Health Authority area in each of the last five years. [15604]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of babies moved between hospitals to access special care baby units within the Essex Strategic Health Authority area is not collected centrally.

Speech Therapists

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many full-time equivalent posts for *(a)* speech therapists and *(b)* occupational therapists were vacant (i) 12, (ii) 24, (iii) 36 and (iv) 48 months ago; and if she will make a statement; [12386]

(2) how many established full-time equivalent posts for *(a)* speech therapists and *(b)* occupational therapists there are in (i) England and (ii) each primary care trust; how many such posts are vacant; and if she will make a statement. [12389]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the number of vacancies lasting three months or more is collected in the national health service workforce vacancy survey as at 31 March each year. The information available has been placed in the Library.

The number of occupational therapists employed in the NHS has increased by 4,853, or 42 per cent. since 1997 and speech and language therapists have increased by 1,685, or 35 per cent. In addition, there have been increases in the number of students entering training for these professions of 64 per cent. and 62 per cent. respectively since 1999–2000.

Suffolk West Primary Care Trust

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent by Suffolk West Primary Care Trust on salaries and wages for *(a)* general and senior managers, *(b)* nurses and midwives and *(c)* administrative and cleric staff in each of the last five financial years. [15097]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows the information requested for the period 2002–03 to 2003–04. This is the earliest available data.

Expenditure on salaries and wages by Suffolk West Primary Care Trust (PCT)

£

Staff	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Senior managers and managers	801,407	1,199,884
Nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff	4,417,034	4,596,315
Administrative and clerical	1,119,723	1,293,662

Source:
Annual financial returns of Suffolk West PCT.

Sustainable Development

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment is made *(a)* of the environmental impact and *(b)* against sustainable development criteria of bids made for contracts awarded by her Department; who makes such assessments; and whether such assessments are published. [15181]

Caroline Flint: Although the Department has not yet created its own sustainable development procurement policy, its procurement guidance includes advice on sustainable development. Responsibility for assessment rests with the individual business units undertaking the procurement. The Department's procurement guidance advises staff to observe the National Health Service Purchasing and Supply Agency's, which is an Executive agency of the Department, comprehensive sustainable development policy.

Where appropriate, contracts will have sustainable development and environmental assessments built into the evaluation criteria. Evaluations are the responsibility of the individual business units that own the contracts.

Information on evaluation is kept on file.

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what arrangements her Department has in place to publish reports on their key sustainable development impacts. [15182]

Caroline Flint: The Government's sustainable development strategy, "Securing the Future", requires all Government Departments to produce an action plan by December 2005. The Department is in the process of forming its action plan. The action plan itself is likely to clarify the future mechanisms for publishing progress against key actions and there is ongoing discussion about this.

The Department does not currently publish a separate report on sustainable development, but it does publish a section on sustainable development in its annual report both in terms of its operations and its policy.

The Department also completes the annual sustainable development in a Government questionnaire, the results of which are published by the Sustainable Development Commission.

In addition to this, the Department publishes a statement on its website on sustainable development. This statement is kept up to date by named personnel and regularly reviewed.

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to assist the delivery of sustainable development within Government and what progress has been made on her Department's Sustainable Development Strategy. [15434]

Caroline Flint: The Department is committed to the sustainability of its estate and operations, and isworking to meet the targets set out in the framework for sustainable development on the Government Estate. The Department's performance is monitored and reported on in the "Sustainable Development in Government" report.

Departmental officials take part in the discussions on the framework, which is currently under review, as part of the work of the Sustainable Operations Board (SOB) and the SOB working group.

The Department's operational environmental strategy for monitoring and reporting on the use of energy and resources within its buildings, available since 1 January 2002, is now under review. It aims to enable the Department to contribute to a better environment and through this, improve people's health.

As part of our commitment to meeting targets, the Department is implementing an environmental management system (EMS) and training on this. Initiatives include saving energy and water and reducing the impacts of waste and travel. This will be relevant to staff in all buildings.

The Department has been purchasing at least 50 per cent. of its electricity from renewable sources since 2000–01, meaning that by 2003–04, overall carbon emissions had been reduced—from gas and electricity—by 15 per cent. compared with 1999–2000. The Department is in the process of rationalising its estate, and this will provide further opportunities to reduce overall consumption levels. In addition to this, the Department encourages use of video and teleconferences, and staff to work from home where appropriate, eliminating up to 1,200 journeys a month.

The Department is in the process of forming its action plan. The plan will aim to clarify those areas already in progress in the Department, new areas for action; how both staff and stakeholders will become engaged; the mechanism for reporting of progress against targets. The plan will be ready for ministerial approval by December 2005.

Toxic Chemicals in Newborn Babies

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research she has commissioned on the possible presence of toxic chemicals in newborn babies; and if she will make a statement. [15071]

Caroline Flint: There is very little published research on levels of chemicals in newborn babies, reflecting the difficulty and ethical considerations in undertaking such work.

The Department, in conjunction with the Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and the Health and Safety Executive, funded some research on creating an archive of breast milk samples. Some preliminary information on levels of chemicals in human breast milk was available. The Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment recently reviewed preliminary data and made a statement. This is available on the FSA website at http://www.food.gov.uk/science/ouradvisors/toxicity/statements/cotstatements2004branch/cotstatebreastmilk.

Video Conferencing Units

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many video conferencing units are installed in *(a)* her Department and *(b)* each agency of the Department; what percentage of offices have these facilities in each case; and what plans there are to increase the number. [15458]

Jane Kennedy: The Department has a total of 14 fixed video conferencing studios in its main buildings in London and Leeds, with a further 10 mobile video conferencing facilities in meeting rooms and nine desktop, video conferencing units, in these and other departmental locations.

The Department has video conferencing facilities in 44 per cent. of the total number of departmental buildings which accommodate 70 per cent. of staff working on departmental business.

The Department continuously monitors use made of video conferencing facilities to ensure sufficient capacity is available and maximum benefit obtained. There are no current plans to increase capacity. The Department is currently undertaking a strategic review of the technologies available and further investment may result.

The National Health Service Purchasing and Supply Agency (PASA) currently has video conferencing facilities in four out of five, or 80 per cent., of its buildings.

NHS PASA continuously monitors usage levels of all video conferencing facilities. There are currently some web camera trials under way for home based workers, but there are no plans to increase the number of conventional video conferencing facilities.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has video conferencing facilities in all of its four locations.

As part of a process to co-locate most MHRA staff in one building, current and future video conferencing requirements were reviewed in early 2005. There are no plans to increase the number of installed units.

NHS Estates (NHSE) has video conferencing units in five out of six, or 83 per cent., of its offices. NHSE will no longer exist from the end of September 2005; consequently, there are no plans for further investment.

Waiting Times

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time in hospitals within the Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority for a person referred by a general practitioner to see a hospital consultant was in each of the last four years. [15125]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

Median outpatient waiting times in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority area

As at March each year	*Median (weeks)*
2002	8.3
2003	7.2
2004	7.3
2005	7.2

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time for those referred for treatment by GPs in *(a)* each London primary care trust and *(b)* each London health authority was in each year since 1997. [16225]

Jane Kennedy: This information is not available in the format requested because there were changes to national health service organisations from 1997 to date and therefore data are not comparable.

However, the table shows figures prior to 2002 by health authority (HA) and from 2002 by primary care trust (PCT) and strategic health authority (SHA).

Estimated average waiting time for first out-patient appointment following general practitioner written referral, June 1997 to June 2001—health authorities within North Thames and South Thames regional office areas (responsible population based)

Median waiting time (weeks)

		Quarter ended				
Code	*Name*	*June 1997*	*June 1998*	*June 1999*	*June 2000*	*June 2001*
QA2	Hillingdon HA	6.7	7.4	8.3	9.1	7.6
QA3	Kensington, Chelsea and Westminster HA	5.8	3.9	8.0	6.9	6.6
QA4	Enfield and Haringey HA	6.8	7.7	8.6	8.8	n/a
QA5	Redbridge and Waltham Forest HA	7.3	7.4	8.7	8.8	8.3
QAA	Bexley and Greenwich HA	5.6	7.3	6.9	7.3	n/a
QAC	Bromley HA	8.0	8.2	8.7	6.6	n/a
QAD	Croydon HA	5.0	6.0	6.7	7.1	6.0
QAG	Kingston and Richmond HA	5.4	4.6	5.4	5.9	5.6
QAH	Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham HA	7.1	8.2	7.9	7.0	7.2
QAJ	Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth HA	5.3	3.6	7.0	6.7	6.4
QAP	Barking and Havering HA	8.0	8.2	8.7	8.0	8.4

Estimated average waiting time for first out-patient appointment following general practitioner written referral, June 1997 to June 2001—health authorities within North Thames and South Thames regional office areas (responsible population based)

Median waiting time (weeks)

Code	Name	Quarter ended June 1997	June 1998	June 1999	June 2000	June 2001
QAQ	Barnet HA	5.6	6.6	7.1	7.7	n/a
QAR	Brent and Harrow HA	6.8	5.8	7.2	6.9	6.9
QAT	Camden and Islington HA	5.8	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.2
QAV	Ealing, Hammersmith and Hounslow HA	5.6	6.4	6.7	6.4	6.3
QAW	East London and City HA	7.5	8.9	8.5	8.1	7.6
QEW	Barnet, Enfield and Haringey	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	8.0
QEY	Bromley, Bexley and Greenwich	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	7.3

n/a—not applicable.

Note:

Health authority reorganisation 2001–02:

Barnet HA and Enfield and Haringey HA merged to form Barnet, Enfield and Haringey HA.

Bexley and Greenwich HA and Bromley HA merged to form Bromley, Bexley and Greenwich HA.

Source:

Department of Health form QM08R.

Estimated average waiting time for first out-patient appointment following GP written referral, June 2002 to June 2005—PCTs within SHAs in London (responsible population based)

Median waiting time (weeks)

Code	Name	Quarter ended June 2002	June 2003	June 2004	June 2005
5AT	Hillingdon PCT	7.8	7.6	7.3	7.0
5H1	Hammersmith and Fulham PCT	6.3	6.4	6.2	7.2
5HX	Ealing PCT	7.3	5.7	8.3	8.0
5HY	Hounslow PCT	6.6	6.9	7.1	6.7
5K5	Brent PCT	6.5	7.5	8.0	8.5
5K6	Harrow PCT	7.9	7.9	9.1	8.5
5LA	Kensington and Chelsea PCT	6.3	6.8	6.6	7.2
5LC	Westminster PCT	7.1	7.6	7.0	7.5
	North West London SHA	7.0	7.1	7.5	7.6
5A9	Barnet PCT	8.3	7.9	7.7	7.6
5C1	Enfield PCT	10.5	8.3	8.0	7.9
5C9	Haringey PCT	7.5	6.7	6.5	7.1
5K7	Camden PCT	8.2	7.1	7.2	9.4
5K8	Islington PCT	6.0	6.1	6.3	10.7
	North Central London SHA	8.2	7.3	7.2	8.2
5A4	Havering PCT	8.4	8.8	8.1	6.9
5C2	Barking and Dagenham PCT	9.1	8.7	8.6	7.3
5C3	City and Hackney PCT	7.5	6.5	5.8	5.7
5C4	Tower Hamlets PCT	7.7	7.6	7.7	7.4
5C5	Newham PCT	7.5	6.9	7.0	8.3
5C6	Walthamstow, Leyton and Leytonstone PCT	8.8	n/a	n/a	n/a
5C7	Chingford, Wanstead and Woodford PCT	8.2	n/a	n/a	n/a
5C8	Redbridge PCT	9.5	n/a	n/a	n/a
5NA	Redbridge PCT	n/a	9.4	7.3	7.2
5NC	Waltham Forest PCT	n/a	8.6	8.1	7.9
	North East London SHA	8.2	7.9	7.4	7.2
5A7	Bromley PCT	6.6	5.9	6.1	6.1
5A8	Greenwich PCT	8.7	7.6	7.2	6.7
5LD	Lambeth PCT	8.3	8.0	7.5	7.1
5LE	Southwark PCT	8.4	7.9	7.7	7.1
5LF	Lewisham PCT	8.1	8.4	7.7	8.4
5AX	Bexley PCT	8.1	7.3	n/a	n/a
TAK	Bexley Care Trust	n/a	n/a	7.0	6.6
	South East London SHA	7.9	7.4	7.2	7.9
5A5	Kingston PCT	6.7	7.0	6.8	6.7
5K9	Croydon PCT	6.8	5.8	7.7	6.6
5LG	Wandsworth PCT	6.6	7.0	6.2	6.4
5M6	Richmond and Twickenham PCT	5.8	6.0	6.2	6.1
5M7	Sutton and Merton PCT	6.9	7.3	6.9	6.7
	South West London SHA	6.6	6.6	6.8	6.5

n/a—not applicable.

Notes:

1. Strategic health authorities in London:

North West London, North Central London, North East London, South East London, South West London.

2. Primary Care Trust re-organisation 2003–04:

Redbridge PCT (5C8) and Chingford, Wanstead and Woodford PCT (part) merged to form Redbridge PCT (5NA).

Walthamstow, Leyton and Leytonstone PCT and Chingford, Wanstead and Woodford PCT (part) merged to form Waltham Forest PCT.

Source:

Department of Health form QM08R.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time was between general practitioner referral and hospital treatment in the *(a)* Essex Health Authority area and *(b)* Castle Point and Rochford Primary Care Trust in the last period for which figures are available. [15606]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Government's target is that by the end of 2008 no patient will have to wait more than 18 weeks from general practitioner referral to start of hospital treatment. We do not currently collect information on the length of time from GP referral to start of treatment, so it is not yet possible to report on individual organisations' progress towards the target. We will be working with the national health service to introduce new data reporting systems to support delivery of the target.

Ward Temperatures

Stephen Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidelines her Department has issued to hospitals regarding the maximum temperature allowed on wards for the welfare of staff and the comfort of patients. [16353]

Jane Kennedy: General guidance on the design and control of environmental temperatures in ward areas are contained in the Department's health building note 04, "Inpatient Accommodation Options for Choice", and health technical memorandum 2025, "Ventilation in Healthcare Premises Design Considerations". No maximum temperature is identified except where related to summertime temperatures when measures should be considered to maintain internal temperature to a value not exceeding three degrees Celsius above external shade temperature.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Affordable Housing

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was allocated for the provision of affordable housing in each of the Northern Ireland constituencies in each of the last five years. [15314]

Mr. Hanson: I have taken affordable housing to mean social housing for rent and low cost private sector housing the purchasers of which receive assistance through the Northern Ireland Co-ownership scheme. The following table shows the total cost of social dwellings for rent started in each year:

Social housing costs by constituency

£000

Constituency	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
East Antrim	0	724	2,084	2,603	2,699
North Antrim	3,070	368	998	1,948	1,224
South Antrim	1,423	569	574	1,107	1,442
Upper Bann	345	0	1,022	2,516	1,637
East Belfast	5,741	4,780	4,255	8,044	3,945
North Belfast	8,078	16,045	19,152	31,567	27,487
South Belfast	3,440	12,375	3,421	5,987	3,890
West Belfast	8,646	11,632	10,742	35,281	37,686
North Down	0	3,305	1,986	6,318	2,932
South Down	743	4,779	568	2,915	2,067
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	3,600	562	2,414	3,125	4,171
Foyle	20,970	5,655	3,123	6,340	11,082

Social housing costs by constituency

£000

Constituency	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Lagan Valley	6,091	639	9,507	10,524	14,341
East Londonderry	2,852	481	3,451	6,160	117
Mid Ulster	179	623	919	216	244
Newry and Armagh	960	1,570	2,403	2,828	6,972
Strangford	0	1,377	0	208	1,523
West Tyrone	747	6,922	597	3,836	2,475
Totals	66,885	72,406	67,216	131,523	125,934

Funding for the Northern Ireland Co-ownership scheme, under which participants part purchase, part rent homes is allocated on a demand led, first come first served basis, and not by constituency. Information is not held in the format requested and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. Expenditure by the Co-ownership Housing Association is made up of housing association grant provided by the Department supplemented by surpluses generated by the association itself. The allocation of funding for the co-ownership scheme for each of the past five years were as follows:

Funding for co-ownership scheme

£ million

	DSD	NICHA	Total
2000-01	5.8	6.6	12.4
2001-02	10.2	9.8	20.0
2002-03	12.9	12.2	25.1
2003-04	7.9	7.7	15.6
2004-05	12.6	6.2	18.8

Existing Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Housing Association properties are available for sale with discount to sitting tenants. These sales are demand led and add to the availability of affordable homes for purchase.

Ambulance Service

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many emergency calls have been received by the ambulance services in each of the last five years. [15306]

Mr. Woodward: The numbers of emergency calls received by the ambulance service in each of the last five calendar years are as follows:

Ambulance service—emergency calls

	Number of calls
2004	113,242
2003	115,009
2002	109,870
2001	104,167
2000	91,392

Areas of Special Scientific Interest

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to ensure that all qualifying areas of special scientific interest in Northern Ireland are declared by 2010 in relation to the UK's commitment to halt biodiversity loss. [15176]

Angela E. Smith: The target for Northern Ireland is to maintain or improve the conservation condition of 95 per cent. of the features underlying the designation of internationally important wildlife sites and ASSIs by 2013. In a report published on 8 July it is shown that almost two thirds of the features of Northern Ireland's ASSIs are in favourable condition. Steps are being taken both to complete the declaration of ASSIs and to protect and manage existing sites.

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the amount of funding required by the Environment and Heritage Service to meet its target *(a)* of completing the full area of special scientific interest designation programme by 2015 and *(b)* of ensuring that 95 per cent. of features of areas of special scientific interest are in or approaching favourable condition by 2013. [15177]

Angela E. Smith: Substantial additional resources have been allocated to the ASSI programme and a comprehensive review will be undertaken in 2006 to assess progress towards achievement of the targets.

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding was requested by Environment and Heritage Service for work on the areas of special scientific interest programme in the budget rounds of *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2005–06; and how much funding was allocated. [15178]

Angela E. Smith: In the Spending Review of 2002, the Department of the Environment sought an additional £100,000 for each of the financial years 2003–04, 2004–05 and 2005–06 for this work. An additional allocation of £100,000 was duly made for each of these three years.

No additional allocations were sought in the 2004 Spending Review.

Arson Attacks (Schools)

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many arson attacks there were on schools in Northern Ireland in each of the last four years. [15316]

Angela E. Smith: The Education and Library Boards have advised that the number of arson attacks on controlled and maintained schools in the last four years are as follows:

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Belfast	5	7	4	2
North Eastern	2	2	2	1
South Eastern	[1]—	5	8	6
Southern	5	5	1	1
Western	2	1	1	4
Total	14	20	16	14

[1] Information not readily available.

The Boards do not hold information on arson attacks on voluntary grammar and grant maintained integrated schools.

Bomb Squad

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* Police Service Northern Ireland and *(b)* Army personnel were working within the bomb squad in Northern Ireland on the last day for which figures are available. [14494]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service for Northern Ireland does not deploy personnel as part of any bomb squad operating in Northern Ireland. All bomb squad personnel working within Northern Ireland are the responsibility of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence.

Bovine Tuberculosis

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much money was spent on the eradication of bovine tuberculosis in Northern Ireland in the financial year 2003–04; and how much was spent on *(a)* administration, *(b)* field activity and *(c)* compensation to farmers. [16141]

Angela E. Smith: During the financial year 2003–04, total expenditure on the tuberculosis eradication scheme was £28.1 million. Compensation to farmers amounted to £15.4 million. Staff administration costs were £4.3 million while field activity, which includes payments to private veterinary practitioners for testing, purchase of tuberculin, haulier payments and research and development costs, accounted for a further £8.4 million. Some £3.6 million was recouped in salvage payments.

Child Protection Services

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the governance arrangements are for child protection services between trusts, boards and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in Northern Ireland. [16599]

Mr. Woodward: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety provides legislation, policy and procedural guidance to enable Boards and Trusts to safeguard children and promote their welfare. The Department is responsible for ensuring that Boards and Trusts have established satisfactory arrangements for the discharge of all child protection functions under the Children (NI) Order 1995 and other relevant legislation and guidance. The Department ensures this through a range of accountability, reporting and monitoring mechanisms.

Boards are responsible for planning to meet child protection needs within their areas through the Children's Services Planning process and for commissioning from Trusts the full range of child protection services. Each Board has an Area Child Protection Committee overseeing child protection arrangements throughout the Board area. Each Board is responsible for ensuring that Trusts have proper arrangements in place to fulfil all relevant child protection functions under the Children Order, which the Board has delegated to them. Boards have the authority to monitor, evaluate and inspect services directly and to require Trusts to provide them with information on any matter related to the discharge of relevant child protection functions.

Trusts are responsible in law for the discharge of all relevant child protection functions delegated to them by Boards. They are accountable to Boards and through them to the Department for ensuring that child protection services are provided in accordance with the arrangements set out in the Boards' Schemes for Delegation of Statutory Functions and to any standards prescribed under the authority of the Schemes.

Computer Crime

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many cases of computer *(a)* hacking, *(b)* fraud and *(c)* theft his Department recorded in each year since 2001–02; and for each year, on how many occasions computer systems have been illegally accessed by computer hackers (i) within and (ii) outside his Department. [7189]

Angela E. Smith: The following number of cases have been recorded in the 11 Departments of the Northern Ireland administration and their agencies and the Northern Ireland Office for the three years ending 31 March 2004:

	Number of cases		
	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
(a) Computer hacking	5	3	12
(b) Computer fraud	0	0	0
(c) Computer theft	9	4	4
(i) Illegal accesses by computer hackers within his Department	4	3	11
(ii) Illegal accesses by computer hackers outside his Department	1	0	1

Figures for 2004–05 are currently being finalised and details will be provided as soon as they are available.

Consultants

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the *(a)* names and *(b)* numbers of management consultants employed by his Department in each of the last three years. [14240]

Angela E. Smith: I have placed in the Library, information on the names and numbers of management consultants employed by the 11 Departments of the Northern Ireland administration and the Northern Ireland Office excluding agencies and non-departmental bodies in each of the last three years.

Contractors

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the contractors based in other EU member states that are providing services to his Department. [15448]

Angela E. Smith: Information on contractors based in other EU member states that are providing services to Northern Ireland Departments is not held centrally and could be obtained only from individual Departments at disproportionate cost. However, the annual statutory EU Statistical Survey on the award of public sector contracts shows that the following contractors from other EU member states were awarded EU regulated contracts by Northern Ireland Departments during the period 1 January 2004 to 31 March 2005:

Republic of Ireland:

Komex,

Accenture,

James Boylan Ltd,

JVA Analytical, and

Timberjack Ireland.

Sweden:

Avure Technologies AB.

Councils (Employees/Assets)

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time people are employed in each of the 26 councils within Northern Ireland. [15189]

Angela E. Smith: The most up-to-date record of district council staff numbers is set out in the following table.

District council	*Full-time employees*	*Part-time employees*[1]
Antrim	208	70
Ards	299	82
Armagh	213	48
Ballymena	129	18
Ballymoney	89	31
Banbridge	156	32
Belfast	1,810	549
Carrickfergus	152	44
Castlereagh	216	64
Coleraine	251	48
Cookstown	126	68
Craigavon	380	60
Derry	449	109
Down	236	54
Dungannon and South Tyrone	80	36
Fermanagh	212	31
Larne	146	13
Limavady	110	32
Lisburn	455	6
Magherafelt	121	76
Moyle	101	13
Newry and Mourne	367	32
Newtownabbey	281	181
North Down	301	152
Omagh	249	172
Strabane	141	11
Total	7,278	2,032

[1] Part-time denotes anyone working fewer than 30 hours per week, including job sharers.

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* estimated cost and *(b)* insurance value of the assets held by each district council in Northern Ireland are. [14507]

Angela E. Smith: The estimated cost or insurance value of individual district councils' assets are not held by the Department of the Environment. However, councils' assets are professionally valued every five years and the most up-to-date figures available, which have been extracted from councils' 2003–04 accounts, are reflected in the following table.

£

District council	Total fixed assets at 31 March 2005
Antrim	21,739,440
Ards	36,684,156
Armagh	42,480,657
Ballymena	47,392,975
Ballymoney	16,501,063
Banbridge	26,339,822
Belfast	333,154,418
Carrickfergus	32,927,464
Castlereagh	37,893,870
Coleraine	65,910,444
Cookstown	19,895,515
Craigavon	43,961,402
Derry	79,327,657
Down	24,112,223
Dungannon and South Tyrone	21,177,496
Fermanagh	34,182,741
Larne	31,379,779
Limavady	20,395,245
Lisburn	71,322,613
Magherafelt	19,248,457
Moyle	22,001,161
Newry & Mourne	52,595,245
Newtownabbey	100,688,863
North Down	70,761,938
Omagh	27,322,234
Strabane	9,669,175
Total	1,309,066,053

Departmental Land

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what land his Department *(a)* is offering for sale, lease-back or similar disposal and *(b)* plans to offer in the next 12 months; and what the (i) location, (ii) size and (iii) best estimate of value is in each case. [14529]

Angela E. Smith: It is not possible to provide the information requested in respect of the next 12 calendar months. However, as departmental property strategies are closely aligned with overall financial planning, details of the land proposed for disposal by the Northern Ireland Office, the eleven Departments of the Northern Ireland Administration and their agencies during the current financial year are given in the following table:

Address	Size		Value (£)
Randalstown Road (plot A Castle Road), Antrim	4.35	Acres	n/k
23 Steeple Road, Antrim	0.26	Acres	44,000
77 Riverside, Pigeon Hill, Antrim	2.76	Acres	825,000
Birchill Road/Ballygore Road, Antrim—plots 15 and 16	27.49	Acres	2,530,000
Nursery Park, Antrim	0.62	Acres	137,500
Land at Caulside—58A New Lodge Road, Antrim	1.13	Acres	5,500
Culnafeigh Green, Antrim	0.04	Acres	22,000
Land adjacent to St. Judes, 4 Ballycraigy Road, Muckamore	0.03	Acres	1,000
Plot B Castle Road, Antrim—Cycle Lane to Roads Service	2.02	Acres	5,150
Riverside Walkway, Antrim	40.82	Acres	1
The Steeple, Antrim	0.039	Acres	1,000
Land at junction of Belfast Road/Fountain Hill, Antrim	1.14	Acres	1
Bridge Street, Ballymena	House	—	60,000
Land at Tullygarley—Dunluce Park, Ballymena	4.9	Acres	50,000
18 Antrim Road, Ballymena	0.16	Acres	8,000
Land at Ballee Road West, Ballymena	0.83	Acres	50,000
Larne Road, Ballymena	0.56	Acres	1
Woodside Road, Ballymena	1.371	Acres	80,000
Laneway at Old Antrim Road, Ballymena	0.68	Acres	20,000
Charlestown Road/New Charlestown Road, Portadown	30	Acres	1,800,000
Lands adjacent to Drumgor Park, Craigavon	1.072	Acres	n/k
Portadown Road, 1 Ballynamoney Lane, Lurgan	13.76	Acres	4,000,000

Address	Size		Value (£)
Lands at Ballinacor, Portadown	4.98	Acres	40,000
Encroachment of lands at Upper Ramone/Bocombra, Portadown (540 sq m)	0.133	Acres	[1]
Cycleway at Pinebank, Craigavon	0.320	Acres	900
Lands adjacent. to 70 Silverwood Road, Lurgan	9.67	Acres	300,000
Lands at Eastway, Craigavon	13.5	Acres	450,000
Lands adjacent to 81 Kernan Gardens, Portadown	0.066	Acres	1,000
Land at Franklyn Park, Lurgan	3. 32	Acres	175,000
Encroachment of land adjacent to Franklyn Park, Lurgan (53 sq m)	0.013	Acres	[1]
Lands adjacent to Seagoe Cemetery, Seagoe Road, Portadown	0.462	Acres	n/k
Lands at Drumgask, Craigavon	6.8	Acres	15,000
Craigavon Balancing Lakes—none available	—	—	[1]
B2 Silverwood Junction, Lurgan	0.810	Acres	[1]
Plot 4, Rodgers Quay, Carrickfergus	—	—	70,000
Lonsdale Road, Armagh	—	—	[1]
Car Park, Coleraine	—	—	2,500,000
Linenhall Street, Ballymoney	0.13	Hectares	n/k
Land at rear of 17a Market Street, Lurgan	—	—	n/k
Slater's Cross, Belleek	—	—	[1]
Car Park at Cliff Road, Belleek	—	—	60,000
Upper North Street, Carrickfergus	—	—	25,000
Former Railway Track, Coalisland			
Site A	4.39	Acres	16,000
Site C	2.53	Acres	n/k
Union Place, Dungannon			
Site 3	0.0034	Hectares	250
Site 5	0.0038	Hectares	250
Site 8	0.0475	Hectares	1,000
Sites 9 and 10	0.0306	Hectares	700
11 Market Square, Dungannon	0.0026	Hectares	250
Eden Street, Enniskillen	0.007	Hectares	80,000
Land adjacent to Durham Street/Durham Court, Belfast	0.067	Hectares	70,000
124–138 Peters Hill, Belfast	0.060	Hectares	99,750
357–361 Donegall Road, Belfast	0.03	Hectares	168,000
339–343 Donegall Road, Belfast	0.22	Hectares	625,000
183–191 Beersbridge Road, Belfast	0.020	Hectares	152,250
211–217 Beersbridge Road, Belfast	0.020	Hectares	78,750
155–157 Newtownards/Ards Road, Tower Street, Belfast	0.0984	Hectares	36,750
68–72 Newtownards Road, Belfast	0.19	Hectares	420,000
2A Adam Street, Belfast	0.02205	Hectares	76,125
118–120 Antrim Road, Belfast	0.040	Hectares	199,500

Address		Size		Value (£)
127 Ballygomartin Road, Belfast	0.0694	Hectares		31,500
181 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast	0.0107	Hectares		8,400
126–130 Sandy Row and 39–49 Albion Street, Belfast	0.355	Hectares		767,500
Land at Lenamore, Londonderry	0.369	Hectares		275,000
Former Donard Special Care School, Banbridge	1.0	Acre		250,000
Lands at Muckamore Abbey Hospital	33	Acres		240,000
5 Annadale Avenue, Belfast	0.32	Acres		600,000
216 Belmont Road, Belfast	0.48	Acres		800,000
Former Glenside Special Care School, Strabane	0.49	Acres		250,000
Lands at Antrim Hospital, Antrim	3.16	Acres		1,100,000
Lands at Riverview Road, Omagh	11. 20	Acres		25,000
Lands at Drumakilly Road, Omagh	4.75	Acres		3,300,000
Desertcreat Farm, Cookstown	105	Hectares		2,000,000
53 Mandeville Avenue, Lisburn	0.200	Hectares		70,000
Tandragee Gate Lodge	0.225	Hectares		90,000
White Water Cottage	0.053	Hectares		6,000
20 Mullyburtian Road, Limaskea	0.133	Hectares		60,000
22 Mullyburtian Road, Lisnaskea	0.08	Hectares		65,000
86 Alderwood Road, Mullaghfad	0.06	Hectares		40,000
Craigmore Cam. County Londonderry	0.01	Hectares		200
Slievagh, Portglenone	0.140	Hectares		530
Gortatole, Maribank, County Fermanagh	110	Hectares		350
Cloghmore, Spring Grove, County Fermanagh	0.37	Hectares		3,500
Shanmullagh, Riversdale, County Fermanagh	0.024	Hectares		4,000
Knockmult, Springwell, County Londonderry	0.242	Hectares		3,500
Drumawillin, Ballycastle	2.30	Hectares		6,000
Tullyhogue Fort, Cookstown	20.5	Hectares		405,000
House at Glenwherry, Ballymena	—	Hectares		76,000
Land at Lough Melvin	0.15	Hectares		15,000
East Belfast (garden land)	0.013	Hectares		750
Far Railway Paddock, Hillsborough Estate	1.600	Hectares		n/k

[1] Nominal.

Notes:

1. Where £1 nominal is quoted, the circumstances are typically that the ongoing management costs of or obligation of ownership extinguish any value.
2. Some properties have yet to be valued and the entries for these are marked as n/k (not known).
3. Estimates of value are necessarily provisional in nature. They will be subject to ongoing review so that any changes in circumstances, for instance to planning approvals, can be taken into account prior to disposal.
4. Departments are obliged to keep their property holdings under continual review. Therefore, although the list of properties for disposal is accurate as regards current plans, it may be subject to future amendment.

Education (Appointments/Funding)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the appointments of principals over the past five years, broken down by *(a)* sector, *(b)* school type, *(c)* Education and Library Board and *(d)* date. [11343]

Angela E. Smith: Full details of principals appointed over the past five years could be supplied only at disproportionate cost. However, a summary is provided in the following table of the 424 principals appointed over the past five years, broken down by *(a)* sector, *(b)* school type and *(c)* Education Library Board.

	Controlled	*Voluntary grammar*	*Catholic maintained*	*Other including grant maintained integrated*	*Totals*
BELB					
Nursery	3	—	4	—	—
Primary	11	—	15	3	—
Secondary	13	—	12	—	—
Total	27	8	31	3	69
WELB					
Nursery	6	—	4	—	—
Primary	17	—	41	2	—
Secondary	6	—	7	2	—
Total	29	3	52	4	88
NEELB					
Nursery	6	—	2	—	—
Primary	40	—	30	9	—
Secondary	4	—	6	1	—
Total	50	5	38	10	103
SEELB					
Nursery	2	—	2	—	—
Primary	19	—	20	6	—
Secondary	13	—	1	3	—
Total	34	4	23	9	70
SELB					
Nursery	3	—	3	—	—
Primary	20	—	41	6	—
Secondary	8	—	5	—	—
Total	31	8	49	6	94
Totals	171	28	193	32	424

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding he allocated to each of the Education and Library Boards for *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* the three previous financial years; and what the projected or actual overspend or underspend is in each. [14502]

Angela E. Smith: The following table shows the funding (recurrent and capital) allocated to each of the Education and Library Boards by the three funding Departments, Department of Education (DE), Department of Culture Arts and Leisure (DCAL) and Department of Employment and Learning (DEL) in *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* in the three previous financial years, i.e. 2002–03 to 2004–05.

2005–06 (initial allocation) [1]

£ million

	BELB	*NEELB*	*SEELB*	*SELB*	*WELB*	*Total*
Recurrent	210.3	269.3	244.7	278.1	233.8	1,236.2
Capital	14.1	18.0	20.6	19.5	18.0	90.2
Total	224.4	287.3	265.3	297.6	251.8	1,326.4

[1] In 2005–06 some £75 million recurrent (mainly earmarked) funding has still to be allocated, along with the Boards' share of the £12.5 million funding package announced on 20 June 2005. Arrangements for the distribution of this £12.5 million are currently under consideration.

2002–03 to 2004–05 (final allocation)

£ million

	BELB	*NEELB*	*SEELB*	*SELB*	*WELB*	*Total*
2004–05						
Recurrent	208.2	261.2	235.3	274.5	284.8	1,264.0
Capital	7.7	14.6	25.8	16.0	21.9	86.0
Total	215.9	275.8	261.1	290.5	306.7	1,350.0
2003–04						
Recurrent	211.4	265.4	232.9	271.5	258.4	1,239.6
Capital	12.5	13.9	14.3	11.6	13.3	65.6
Total	223.9	279.3	247.2	283.1	271.7	1,305.2
2002–03						
Recurrent	202.3	246.2	222.5	252.6	234.6	1,158.2
Capital	8.0	12.8	17.8	9.1	12.5	60.2
Total	210.3	259.0	240.3	261.7	247.1	1,218.4

Cumulative sums unspent at 31 March 2005 are as follows. Figure are passed on provisional outturn in 2004–05:

£ million

	BELB	*NEELB*	*SEELB*	*SELB*	*WELB*
Recurrent	—	4.7	—	6.9	8.4
Capital	3.4	0.5	1.1	2.4	0.5

Cumulative recurrent overspend at 31 March 2005 based on unaudited 2004–05 accounts is as follows:

£ million

BELB	*SEELB*
10.7	20.5

Education Expenditure

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was spent per head per child in the *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary education sector in Northern Ireland in (i) 2004, (ii) 2000 and (iii) 1995. [16336]

Angela E. Smith: The information cannot be provided in the format requested as expenditure on schools by all Funding Authorities is recorded on a financial year basis as opposed to a calendar year basis. However, the following financial year information is available:

£

	Primary per capita	*Post primary per capita*
1994–95	1,470	2,312
1999–2000	1,989	2,866
2003–04	2,664	3,731

Notes:

1. The information is based on Funding Authorities published Outturn Statements and comprises funding directly allocated to schools through formula funding arrangements and funding directly attributable to schools (e.g. funding spent on rates; teaching and non-teaching redundancies, etc). It does not include expenditure on central services provided by the Education and Library Boards on such areas as home to school transport, school

meals and, curriculum advisory support services. Expenditure on those areas cannot be readily apportioned between the primary and post-primary Sectors.

2. The figures for the primary sector include both the pupils numbers and costs of pupils in nursery classes as expenditure for these pupils cannot be separately identified.

3. The figures for the post primary sector include both the pupils numbers and costs of pupils in preparatory departments as expenditure for these pupils cannot be separately identified.

Educational Psychologists

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many educational psychologists were employed in the *(a)* Southern and *(b)* South Eastern Education and Library Boards in (i) 2004 (ii) 2000 and (iii) 1995. [16139]

Angela E. Smith: The information is as follows:

Southern Education and Library Board (SELB)

The following are the number of Educational Psychologists employed by the SELB in the years indicated:

	Full-time equivalent
1995	Not available
2000	22.75
2004	29.31

South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB)

The following are the number of Educational Psychologists employed by the SEELB in the years indicated:

	Full-time equivalent
1995	15.66
2000	21
2004	22.8

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average waiting time for an assessment to be undertaken by an educational psychologists in the *(a)* Southern and *(b)* South Eastern Education and Library Board of a child in the primary sector was in 2004–05. [16140]

Angela E. Smith: The information is as follows:

(a) Southern Education and Library Board

In 2004–05 the average response time in the primary sector for returning psychological advice, in connection with the statutory assessment process, was within six weeks.

(b) South Eastern Education and Library Board

In 2004–05 the average response time in the primary sector for returning psychological advice, in connection with the statutory assessment process, was four weeks.

Electricity Charges

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he has held with Northern Ireland Electricity regarding the level of electricity charges in Northern Ireland. [16337]

Angela E. Smith: The level of electricity charges in Northern Ireland is primarily a matter for the Northern Ireland Authority for Energy Regulation and Northern Ireland Electricity.

I plan to meet with representatives of Northern Ireland Electricity in the near future.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the recent assessment published by the Electricity Regulator in Northern Ireland of the price of electricity in Northern Ireland compared to the rest of the UK. [16138]

Angela E. Smith: I concur with the conclusion that the excess generation costs inherited from privatisation are the main reason for the higher electricity prices paid by consumers in Northern Ireland compared to their counterparts in the remainder of the United Kingdom.

I also accept that the excess generation costs are likely to be of the order stated. However, the average cost per household is probably overstated given the proportion of the excess costs borne by other non-household consumers.

The Government are pursuing a number of options to reduce electricity costs.

English Language Support

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what guidelines his Department issues to Education and Library Boards regarding the provision of English as an additional language support. [13281]

Angela E. Smith: Under Article 6 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland Order) 1986, Education and Library Boards are required to afford for all pupils opportunities for education offering such variety of instruction and training as may be desirable in view of their different ages, abilities and aptitudes, including practical instruction and training appropriate to their respective needs.

The Department is in the early stages of developing a policy for EAL. Equality issues will be considered during the development of the policy and full and meaningful consultation will take place with all interested parties throughout the development process.

A new policy should be developed by September 2006.

Equality and Diversity

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much the Department has spent promoting equality and diversity in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [14661]

Angela E. Smith: Promoting equality and diversity are fundamental principles underpinning the functions of each of the 11 Departments in the Northern Ireland administration and the Northern Ireland Office (NIO), and are mainstreamed into departmental processes and decision making. It would not therefore be possible to apportion costs to these activities with any degree of accuracy. However, we estimate that in the 11 Departments of the Northern Ireland administration

and NIO there were approximately 135 full-time equivalent (FTE) officials involved wholly or mainly in promoting equality and diversity at a total cost of approximately £4.3 million. The corresponding figure for NIO shows that there were approximately eight FTE officials at a cost of approximately £305,000.

In addition, the budget for the Equality Directorate of the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister for delivery of services relating to equality, diversity and good relations the last year was approximately £29 million, including funding for the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, the Community Relations Council and the office of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People. The Department for Culture Arts and Leisure had a programme budget relating to diversity of £5.3 million last year.

Family and Child Care Services

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the adequacy of funding arrangements for family and child care services in Northern Ireland. [16601]

Mr. Woodward: There has been very significant investment in the Pre-school Expansion programme, the Sure Start programme and a range of other child care provisions throughout Northern Ireland. Further investment is required to ensure that every child has the best start in life and this will be a priority in future budget allocations.

Farmers (Bankruptcies)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many bankruptcies of farmers in Northern Ireland there were in each of the last 15 years; what percentage of the total number of farmers this represented in each year; and what the percentage change in bankruptcies was in each year. [15082]

Angela E. Smith: Bankruptcies of farmers in Northern Ireland from year ending 31 March 1996 to year ending 31 March 2005:

Number of bankruptcies in year ending 31 March	*Number of farm businesses*[1]	*Number of bankruptcy orders made*[2]	*Percentage of bankruptcies to farm businesses*	*Percentage change in bankruptcies*
1996	32,630	22	0.07	n/a
1997	32,118	10	0.03	-54.5
1998	31,817	23	0.07	+130.0
1999	31,132	23	0.07	No change
2000	29,891	12	0.04	-47.8
2001	29,818	22	0.07	+83.3
2002	28,513	9	0.03	-59.0
2003	28,281	10	0.03	+11.2
2004	27,614	16	0.06	+60.0
2005	Figure not available	18	—	+12.5

[1] The figures in column 2 were supplied by DARD and relate to the number of farm businesses in operation in Northern Ireland each year. The figure for 2005 is not yet available. The statistical definition of an operational farm used for this answer is as follows. "All active farm businesses having one hectare or more of farmed land, whether owned, leased or taken in conacre, and those with under one hectare having any cattle, sheep or pigs or with significant poultry or horticultural activity. Landowners who lease out or rent out in conacre all of their land are not included."

[2] These figures are based on the Standard Industrial Classification of agriculture e.g. "arable and livestock farming, horticulture and all related services", and by definition therefore not all the people declared bankrupt under this classification could be regarded as farmers.

Flags

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many flags have been removed by Police Service Northern Ireland officers in each police district in Northern Ireland in each of the last three years. [14500]

Mr. Woodward: The PSNI have confirmed that verifiable statistics regarding the removal of flags by the PSNI are not currently available. The PSNI have advised that they have written to the Policing Board on this matter and await a response.

Flats above Shops

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in encouraging the use of flats above shops in Northern Ireland. [15163]

Mr. Hanson: The Housing Executive has now written to all district councils in Northern Ireland asking them to submit applications for 'Town Centre Living Initiative Areas' by the end of September 2005. It is anticipated that up to five new areas will be declared each year and the first of these is expected to be announced early in 2006.

Fostering Payments

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much a foster family in Northern Ireland received for each child fostered in each of the last five years. [15085]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is detailed in the following tables.

Basic fostering allowances April 2000–05 (per annum)[1]

	Age bands			
	0–4	*5–10*	*11–15*	*16+*
2000	3,137.68	3,822	4,586.40	6137.04
2001	3,239.60	3,949.40	4,739.28	6,340.88
2002	3,538.08	4,033.12	5,019.56	6,359.08
2003	3,716.44	4,233.32	5,270.72	6,675.76
2004	3,811.08	4,338.88	5,401.76	6,843.20
2005	3,905.72	4,448.08	5,536.44	7,014.28

[1] At March 2005 HSS trusts reported that 215 foster carers received enhanced allowances in respect of children with additional needs and 254 carers (18 per cent.) of foster carers received in additional to allowances a salary (around £11,000).

Basic fostering allowances

These include provision for the following:

	Percentage
Food (including school meals)	40
Household costs	25
Clothing and footwear	18
Pocket money	10
Travel cost	7

Extra allowances

There are four types of extra allowances:

automatic e.g. holidays and outings, birthdays, Christmas, retainer fees, disposal nappies and more than one child allowance;

full cost e.g. school holidays, setting up costs, school activities and tuition; glasses

up to a maximum e.g. initial clothing allowance; musical instruments, bicycle and cultural events;

exceptional circumstances e.g. to meet additional costs associated with implementing a child's care plan.

Total boarding out payments made to foster carers

End of year	*Amount (£)*
2001	[1]—
2002	[1]—
2003	14,768,000
2004	17,030,000
2005	[2]—

[1] Previous returns from HSS trusts do not enable the separate disaggregation of fostering payments.
[2] Not yet available.

Freedom of Information

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Freedom of Information Act 2000 requests have been answered by the Department; and in how many cases *(a)* information was wholly exempted, *(b)* information was partly exempted and *(c)* the requests were answered in full. [14963]

Mr. Hain: The Department for Constitutional Affairs is committed to publishing quarterly updates in relation to departmental performance under FOI, including information on both the volume and outcomes of requests. The first of these updates was published on 23 June 2005 and can be found on the DCA website at http://www.foi.gov.uk/statsjan-mar05.htm and in the House Library. The next bulletin is due in the autumn of this year, while an annual report is also published in early 2006.

Between 1 January 2005 and 31 March 2005 the Northern Ireland Office had received 80 Freedom of Information requests, of which 14 were wholly exempted, 18 partly exempted and 14 were granted in full.

The Office of the First and Deputy First Minister published statistics on the performance of the 11 Northern Ireland Departments under the Freedom of Information Act on 23 June 2005. The following table extracts information from these statistics and covers requests received between 1 January to 31 March 2005. The next statistical update, for the second quarter of the year, is due in the autumn.

Department	*Requests received*	*Requests refused in full*	*Requests refused in part*	*Requests answered in full*
Agriculture and Rural Development	88	16	10	59
Culture, Arts and Leisure	423	5	6	404
Education	34	2	4	26
Employment and Learning	27	2	1	22
Enterprise, Trade and Investment	19	1	4	14
Environment	218	15	45	141
Finance and Personnel	131	7	21	99
Health, Social Services and Public Safety	37	1	3	32
Regional Development	126	1	3	111
Social Development	58	7	8	42
First and Deputy First Minister	31	1	0	28
Total	1,192	58	105	978

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many freedom of information requests have been *(a)* received and *(b)* refused by each Northern Ireland Department since the introduction of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. [15309]

Angela E. Smith: The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister published statistics on the performance of Northern Ireland Departments under the Freedom of Information Act on 23 June 2005. The following table extracts information from these statistics and covers requests received between 1 January 2005 and 31 March 2005. The next statistical update, for the second quarter of the year, is due in the autumn.

Freedom of information

Department	*Requests received*	*Requests refused in full*	*Requests refused in part*
Agriculture and Rural Development	88	16	10
Culture, Arts and Leisure	423	5	6
Education	34	2	4
Employment and Learning	27	2	1

Freedom of information

Department	*Requests received*	*Requests refused in full*	*Requests refused in part*
Enterprise, Trade and Investment	19	1	4
Environment	131	7	21
Finance and Personnel	37	1	3
Health, Social Services and Public Safety	218	15	45
Regional Development	126	1	3
Social Development	58	7	8
First Minister and Deputy First Minister	31	1	0
Totals	1,192	58	105

For the same period, the Northern Ireland Office had received 80 requests, of which 14 had been refused in full and 18 refused in part.

General Grant Funding

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding the Government have provided to each district council in Northern Ireland through the resources element of the general grant factor. [14506]

Angela E. Smith: The resources element of general grant allocated to district councils for 2005–2006 is set out in the following table.

General grant—resources element

£

District council	*2005–06*
Antrim	0
Ards	1,255,948
Armagh	1,783,504
Ballymena	0
Ballymoney	1,052,084
Banbridge	953,758
Belfast	0
Carrickfergus	264,650
Castlereagh	0
Coleraine	0
Cookstown	972,907
Craigavon	0
Derry	1,276,683
Down	1,683,189
Dungannon and South Tyrone	930,916
Fermanagh	1,437,935
Larne	24,202
Limavady	1,308,476
Lisburn	0
Magherafelt	1,466,528
Moyle	585,645
Newry and Mourne	2,043,239
Newtownabbey	0
North Down	0
Omagh	1,407,084
Strabane	2,050,252
Total	20,497,000

GPs

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many GPs in Northern Ireland have been struck off the medical register in each of the last five years, broken down by region or board. [14508]

Mr. Woodward: There have been no general practitioners (GPs) struck off the medical register, in each of the last five years in Northern Ireland.

Heart By-pass Operations

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were waiting for a heart by-pass operation on the latest date for which figures are available. [14521]

Mr. Woodward: At 30 June 2005, there were 276 patients in Northern Ireland waiting for a heart by-pass operation.

Homelessness

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the most recent estimate is of the level of hidden homelessness in Northern Ireland. [15312]

Mr. Hanson: The Northern Ireland Housing Executive has a duty under the Housing (Northern Ireland) Order 1988 to deal with homelessness. During 2004–05, the Housing Executive accepted a total of 8,470 applicants as meeting the statutory criteria for re-housing under the homelessness legislation. However, the Housing Executive is not in a position to estimate the number of persons who may be homeless in Northern Ireland but do not apply for re-housing.

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what changes the Government have made to the eligibility of homeless people for accommodation in Northern Ireland since 2000. [15313]

Mr. Hanson: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has made the following orders:

1. Immigration Control (Housing Authority Accommodation and Homelessness) Order 2000 which provides that persons from abroad who are subject to immigration control are eligible for accommodation under the homelessness legislation if they have refugee status or certain other forms of leave to enter or remain in the UK.

2. Article 137 of the Housing (NI) Order 2003 inserted a new Article 7A in the Housing (NI) Order 1988 which provides that a homeless person is not eligible for accommodation if:

(a) he, or a member of his household, has been guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make him unsuitable to be a tenant of the Housing Executive and, in the circumstances at the time his application is considered, he is unsuitable to be a tenant of the Housing Executive by reason of that behaviour;

(b) he is a person who is subject to immigration control and is ineligible for accommodation by virtue of section 119 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (i.e. he does not belong to a group specified in the Persons subject to Immigration Control (Housing Authority Accommodation and Homelessness) Order 2000); or

(c) he is any other person from abroad who is ineligible for accommodation by virtue of regulations made by the Secretary of State.

3. Homelessness Regulations (NI) 2004 which provide that a homeless person is not eligible for accommodation if:

(a) he is not habitually resident in the common travel area comprising the UK, the Republic of Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man (certain groups, e.g. persons treated as "workers" for the purposes of European legislation, are exempt from this provision); or

(b) his right to reside in the common travel area is derived from certain European directives which apply to people whose right to reside in the UK is conditional on them being self-sufficient and not claiming social assistance.

Hospital Beds

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* intensive care and *(b)* high dependency beds there were in Northern Ireland hospitals in each of the last three years. [15335]

Mr. Woodward: Intensive care and high dependency unit beds form part of the service supplied in the acute sector of care.

The number of intensive care unit beds (ICU) and high dependency unit beds (HDU) in each hospital in each of the last three years is displayed in the following table.

	Position at 31 March					
	2003		2004		2005	
Hospital	ICU	HDU	ICU	HDU	ICU	HDU
Altnagelvin	5	5	5	5	5	5
Belfast City	7	5	7	5	7	5
Causeway	2	2	2	2	2	2
Craigavon Area	6	2	6	2	6	2
Lagan Valley	0	2	0	2	0	2
Mater	2	3	2	3	2	3
Daisy Hill	0	5	0	5	0	5
Royal Victoria	15	5	17	8	17	8
Erne	0	6	0	6	3	4
Tyrone County	0	2	0	2	0	2
Antrim	6	2	6	2	6	2
Mid Ulster	0	3	0	3	0	3
Whiteabbey	0	0	0	2	0	2
Ulster	6	4	6	4	6	4
Total	49	46	51	51	54	49

In addition to those beds included in the previous table, there are a number of critical care beds held for a specific purpose. These are detailed in the following table:

	Position at 31 March					
	2003		2004		2005	
Type of critical care bed/hospital	ICU	HDU	ICU	HDU	ICU	HDU
Post-operative beds at Musgrave Park	0	12	0	14	0	14
Cardiac Surgery beds at the Royal Victoria	9	4	9	4	9	4
Paediatric beds at the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children	7	2	7	2	7	2
Total	16	18	16	20	16	20

The Royal Victoria hospital is funded for eight ICU and six HDU cardiac surgery beds. The figures in the previous table reflect the numbers and types of beds available at a particular point in time. The numbers and types of beds may vary as nurses are used interchangeably depending on the needs of the patients who are in the unit at the time.

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average daily cost of *(a)* an intensive care and *(b)* a high dependency bed in Northern Ireland was in the latest period for which figures are available. [15370]

Mr. Woodward: The latest available costs are for the financial year 2003–04 and show that a bed in an intensive care unit cost £1,670 per day on average and a bed in a high dependency unit cost £610 per day on average.

Invest NI

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many individuals are employed by Invest NI. [11767]

Angela E. Smith: Invest NI currently employs 661 staff (30 June 2005), of whom 54 are part-time. This represents a full-time equivalent staffing of 640.

Invest NI also engages a varying number of contracted staff in its overseas offices and also to deliver specific programmes in Northern Ireland. These currently number 37 in total and are funded separately.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what staff costs have been occurred by Invest NI in each year since it was established. [11768]

Angela E. Smith: Staff costs incurred by Invest NI are as follows:

£

	Amounts paid to staff	Employers contributions for superannuation and national insurance	Total staff costs[1]
2002–03	15,595,000	3,245,000	18,840,000
2003–04	17,010,000	3,524,000	20,534,000
2004–05	17,205,000	3,615,000	20,820,000

[1] These figures do not include the costs of locally engaged staff in overseas offices. (In 2004–05 these costs amounted to £423,000).

Landfill

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much each district council in Northern Ireland has budgeted to spend on landfill for 2005–06; and what the expenditure was in *(a)* 1985–86 and *(b)* 1995–96. [14503]

Angela E. Smith: The information requested is not held centrally and because of the period of time covered and the number of separate bodies involved, could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Learndirect

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the future of the learndirect network in Northern Ireland. [15090]

Angela E. Smith: Funding for Ufi/learndirect in its present form in Northern Ireland will cease on 31 March 2006.

My officials are currently working on a new, broader e-learning strategy, which will be issued for consultation in October 2005. The learndirect centre network will be given the opportunity to identify how they can assist with the delivery of this strategy through a re-alignment of their services.

Library Book Borrowing

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many books were borrowed from each publicly funded library in Northern Ireland in 2004–05. [15267]

Mr. Hanson: The information requested has been placed in the Library. Figures are included for the nine libraries which recently closed in the North Eastern Education and Library Board. This data exclude books issued from mobile libraries.

Lifeguards

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what requirements he is introducing on those council areas that do not provide emergency life savers along their beaches. [14509]

Angela E. Smith: The employment of life-savers and life guards is a matter for individual district councils to determine. There are no plans to direct councils to provide this service.

Loan Sharks

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to assist those who are victims of loan sharks, with particular reference to those whose cases have passed through the courts. [15184]

Angela E. Smith: The Consumer Credit Bill reflects a Government commitment to "tackle loan sharks". The Bill modernises the consumer credit market and makes it much easier for consumers to challenge unfair loan agreements. It will provide a new right to challenge unfair relationships arising out of the terms of loan agreements and the way in which the lender acts. Borrowers will also have the right to take disputes with their lenders to an Ombudsman Service without going through a lengthy and expensive court battle.

Management Consultants

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the total expenditure saved in each of the last three years as a result of implementing recommendations by management consultancies within his Department. [13632]

Angela E. Smith: No central estimate has been made of the total expenditure saved as a result of implementing recommendations by management consultants within the NI Departments over the last three years. However, Departments are required to complete a Post Project Evaluation which, in line with Treasury requirements, must include a benefits realisation assessment. These requirements apply to all policies/projects and policies, including those involving Management Consultants, and are the responsibility of individual Departments.

Mobile Phones/Laptops

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* mobile telephones and *(b)* laptops have been issued to (i) Ministers, (ii) special advisers and (iii) officials in Northern Ireland Government Departments in each of the last eight years; what costs were incurred; and how many have been (A) lost and (B) stolen during that period. [10972]

Angela E. Smith: The information requested by the hon. Lady is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Myasthenia Gravis

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what support he is providing for people diagnosed with Myasthenia Gravis in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [15336]

Mr. Woodward: Myasthenia Gravis is a rare neuromuscular condition which responds well to medical management. Around 20 to 30 patients with Myasthenia Gravis are managed at any one time by the neurology team based at the Royal Group of Hospitals Trust where one of the consultant staff has a special interest in this condition.

Patients are advised about the charity, the Myasthenia Gravis Association, which has branches in Belfast, Lurgan and Omagh.

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the recommendations of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence will be applied in full by the Northern Ireland Health Service. [16354]

Mr. Woodward: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety is putting in place arrangements for reviewing the applicability of National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance to the Health and Personal Social Services in Northern Ireland. Under the new arrangements, which are expected to be fully operational from early 2006, the Department will endorse NICE guidance that is deemed to be applicable for Northern Ireland.

NHS (Agency Staff)

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken to reduce the use of agency staff in the national health service in Northern Ireland. [15331]

Mr. Woodward: The recruitment of staff is a matter for individual health and social services trusts, taking into account factors such as needs and available resources. While the use of agency staff, particularly in nursing, is necessary to ensure continuity of services, the Department wishes to reduce the current levels and is working to address this issue.

The Department is introducing pay modernisation through Agenda for Change to make working as an employee of the HPSS more attractive. In particular, we have increased the number of nurses in training by over 60 per cent. over recent years. As a result, it is expected that this investment in additional student nurses will reduce the number of agency staff required.

Nursing Homes

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average charge per week for persons in nursing homes in Northern Ireland was in the last period for which figures are available. [15332]

Mr. Woodward: The Department collects information on the total spend by trusts on nursing home care per occupied week of care. This information is broken down

by Programme of Care and is collected through trust financial returns. The mean average weekly costs were as follows for 2003–04:

Nursing homes—charges

Service	2003–04 Number of occupied resident weeks	2003–04 Mean average weekly cost (£)
Nursing Care POC 5—mental health	13,052	444
Nursing Care POC 6—learning disability	32,586	521
Nursing Care POC 7—physical and sensory disability	14,998	498
Nursing Care POC 4 EMI—elderly mentally infirm	84,628	423
Nursing Care POC 4 Other—elderly	242,315	423

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many private care home beds there are in each Northern Ireland constituency. [15333]

Mr. Woodward: The number of places in care homes is not recorded according to parliamentary constituency. Information on the number of places in private care homes is also not collected centrally. Information is, however, available on the number of places in all independent (private and voluntary) sector care homes, by health and social services trust area, and is shown in the following table for the position at 31 March 2004, the latest date for which such information is available centrally.

Places in independent (private and voluntary) care homes, Northern Ireland, 31 March 2004

HSS trust	Residential home places	Nursing home places	Total places
Down Lisburn	413	936	1,349
North and West Belfast	237	816	1,053
South and East Belfast	618	1,105	1,723
Ulster	476	977	1,453
Causeway	297	390	687
Homefirst	394	1,877	2,271
Armagh and Dungannon	156	737	893
Craigavon and Banbridge	92	518	610
Newry and Mourne	232	503	735
Foyle	322	734	1,056
Sperrin Lakeland	325	719	1,044
Northern Ireland	3,562	9,312	12,874

Note:
Places in children's homes are excluded. Dual registered places (places registered for both residential and nursing care) are included in nursing home places but excluded from residential home places.

Parades

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which parades in Northern Ireland require a Police Service of Northern Ireland presence. [14497]

Mr. Woodward: The PSNI have advised that an assessment to identify a need for a PSNI presence at any parade would be dependant on the individual circumstances of any such prevailing parade.

Pension Credit

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what percentage of pensioner households in Northern Ireland are in receipt of pension credit. [15186]

Mr. Hanson: The number of pension credit households is open to interpretation. One is for households which equates to the number of residencies. The other takes account of the number of benefit families (i.e. single individual, couple).

	Number
Households (residencies) claiming pension credit	86,404
Households (benefit families) claiming pension credit	91,199

As no baseline figure for the number of pensioner households is available, the percentage of Northern Ireland pensioner households who are in receipt of pension credit is unavailable. However, the number of individuals in receipt of state retirement pension is 268,352. The data are taken from June 2005.

Planning Legislation

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to review Planning Policy Statement 1. [16119]

Angela E. Smith: The review of Planning Policy Statement 1 is scheduled to commence in the current business year.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what the timetable for the introduction of new planning legislation arising from the Reforming Planning Consultation conducted in November 2004 is; and what the *(a)* timetable and *(b)* process for consultation for this legislation is; [16136]

(2) what plans he has to introduce a sustainable development statutory purpose for planning. [16137]

Angela E. Smith: Following the Reforming Planning Consultation, the Department of the Environment intends to issue draft legislation for further public consultation in the autumn. It is intended this will include a statutory requirement for development plan functions to be carried out with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. It is anticipated the legislation will be enacted by spring 2006.

Post Office Closures

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he last met representatives from unions to discuss the closure of post offices in Northern Ireland. [15334]

Angela E. Smith: There have been no meetings between Northern Ireland Ministers and union representatives to discuss post office closures nor am I aware of any request for such a meeting.

Premature Baby Units

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many infants have been treated in each premature baby unit in Northern Ireland in each of the past five years. [13891]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the number of infants treated in neo-natal units in Northern Ireland hospitals is available from each trust providing the facility and is outlined in the following table.

Hospital	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Royal Maternity Hospital	669	681	581	513	495
Ulster Hospital	257	272	290	228	278
Antrim Area Hospital	266	232	251	213	240
Daisy Hill Hospital	208	202	183	230	199
Craigavon Area Hospital	271	240	233	228	256
Altnagelvin Hospital	338	325	264	253	265
Erne Hospital	155	130	130	128	107
All hospitals	2,164	2,082	1,932	1,793	1,840

PSNI

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* Protestants and *(b)* Roman Catholics have applied to join the Police Service of Northern Ireland in each of the past four years; and how many were successful in each case. [15258]

Mr. Woodward: I am advised of the following statistics for PSNI trainee constable recruitment competitions over the last four years:

Date (competition)	Catholic applicants	Non-Catholic applicants	Catholic appointments	Non-Catholic appointments	Comments
March 2001 (1)	2,582	4,936	153	152	Campaign closed
September 2001 (2)	1,892	3,018	98	98	Campaign closed
March 2002 (3)	1,640	3,034	83	83	Campaign closed
September 2002 (4)	1,485	2,894	201	201	Campaign closed
March 2003 (5)	2,196	3,836	149	150	One further appointment to be made
September 2003 (6)	1,908	3,497	148	147	One further appointment to be made
March 2004 (7)	1,712	3,265	110	115	Appointments ongoing
September 2004 (8)	1,986	3,709	—	—	First intake August 2005
March 2005 (9)	2,065	4,045	—	—	Campaign ongoing
Total	17,466	32,234	942	946	

Radiographers

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many radiographers have been employed in the NHS in Northern Ireland in each year since 1997. [15371]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is provided in the following table.

Number of radiographers employed in HPSS

As at 31 March	Headcount	WTE[1]
1997	458	394.7
1998	454	386.1
1999	480	405.6
2000	484	413.6
2001	496	432.9
2002	519	451.2
2003	558	488.5
2004	590	510.8
2005	617	543.1

[1] Whole-time equivalent

Source:
Human Resource Management System

Rail Services

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to improve rail services in Northern Ireland. [15310]

Mr. Woodward: Some £124 million is been provided for rail investment in Northern Ireland over the period 2005–06 to 2007–08. This includes funding for the lesser used lines, where £17 million will be spent over the next five years. Significant funding has already been provided to purchase 23 new train sets (£80 million), 20 of which are now in service, already providing improved frequency of services in the central corridor between Bangor and Portadown. Other major investment projects include the relay of track between Bleach Green and Whitehead (£25 million) and the provision of a train cleaning and stabling facility at Fortwilliam (£11.4 million).

Road Fund Tax

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of current levels of evasion of the road fund tax in Northern Ireland. [15311]

Angela E. Smith: A survey undertaken in mid 2004 estimated that 10 per cent. of revenue was lost due to vehicle excise duty evasion. This equates to £13 million.

The 2005 UK wide survey is currently under way and results will be available later this year.

Royal Victoria Hospital

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the bed capacity is of the Royal Victoria Hospital. [14527]

Mr. Woodward: The current bed capacity of the Royal Victoria Hospital is 750.

Urology

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* average and *(b)* longest current waiting time for an initial urology outpatient assessment is at each trust in the Province which offers this specialty. [11080]

Mr. Woodward: Earlier this month I announced a radical reform programme that will reduce waiting lists to more acceptable levels and eradicate long waiters. Changes to the way in which outpatient services are organised will be introduced which will significantly reduce the length of time patients have to wait for an initial appointment.

Information is not readily available on average waiting times, but the following table provides details of the longest time in days a patient has been waiting for initial outpatient assessment in the urology specialty. The latest information available is representative of the position at 30 June 2005.

Longest waiting time (in days) that an individual is waiting for an initial outpatient assessment in the urology specialty at 30 June 2005

	Number of days
Provider Trust	*Longest Waiting*
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	770
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	806
Causeway HSS Trust	[1]871
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust	2,542
Down Lisburn HSS Trust	[1]126
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	345
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	90

[1] Causeway HSS Trust and Down Lisburn HSS Trust figures refer to patients waiting at 31 May 2005.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* average and *(b)* longest current waiting time is for in-patient surgery in the urology specialty within each trust in the Province which offers this service. [11082]

Mr. Woodward: Earlier this month I announced a radical reform programme that will reduce waiting lists to more acceptable levels and eradicate long waiters. By March 2006, no patient should be waiting more than 12 months for in-patient or day case treatment. Maximum waiting time targets have also been set for major joint replacement (nine months), cataract surgery (nine months) and cardiac surgery (nine months).

Information is not readily available on average waiting times, but the following table provides details of the longest time in days a patient has been waiting for in-patient admission to the urology specialty. The latest information available is representative of the position at 31 May 2005.

Longest waiting time (in days) that an individual is waiting for in-patient admission in the urology specialty at 31 May 2005

Provider trust	*Longest waiting (in days)*
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	[1]658
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	2,191
Causeway HSS Trust	297
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust	[1]3,409
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	406

[1] Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust and Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust figures refer to patients waiting at 30 June 2005.

Victims of Violence

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* paramedics, *(b)* ambulance staff, *(c)* nurses, *(d)* prison officers and *(e)* fire officers have been victims of offences of violence in the course of their employment in each of the last seven years. [15305]

Mr. Woodward: The Northern Ireland Ambulance Services advises that it does not record attacks on paramedics and ambulance staff separately. Also, records of attacks were not kept prior to 2000. The numbers of recorded attacks against ambulance service personnel for the calendar years 2000 to 2004 are as follows:

	Attacks on ambulance staff
2000	38
2001	95
2002	122
2003	188
2004	125
Total	568

Attacks on HPSS staff were not monitored prior to April 2004. In the period 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005 there were 1,032 recorded verbal attacks and 2,305 physical attacks on nursing and midwifery staff.

Recorded attacks on prison officers were as follows:

	Attacks on prison officers
1998	32
1999	70
2000	44
2001	39
2002	33
2003	32
2004	20
Totals	270

The Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service advises that recording of attacks on firefighters commenced in September 2001. Figures for each calendar year are as follows:

	Attacks on fire officers
2001[1]	124
2002	410
2003	327
2004	327
Totals	1,188

[1] From September

Water Service (Overpayment)

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action will be taken by the Water Service to recover the overpayment made to a contractor for laying a pipe. [16142]

Mr. Woodward: The Chief Executive of Water Service, Mrs. Katharine Bryan has written to the hon. Gentleman.

Letter from Mrs. Katharine Bryan to Mr. Eddie McGrady, dated 4 August 2005:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about what action will be taken by the Water Service to recover the overpayment made to a contractor for laying a pipe (16142). I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Water Service.

I am assuming that your question refers to the investigation of suspected fraud in Water Service raised in the Northern Ireland Audit Office Report "Departmental Responses to Recommendations in NIAO Reports" published on 19 July 2005. This publication included a progress report on the recovery of an overpayment from a Water Service contractor.

Civil proceedings were initiated in 2003 and the matter is sub judice. However, I can assure you that Water Service continues to make every effort to progress the recovery of the monies overpaid.

TREASURY

London Olympics

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of new jobs which will be created in London as a result of hosting the 2012 London Olympics. [15569]

Tessa Jowell: I have been asked to reply.

We know from the experience of past host cities that the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games can deliver thousands of jobs.

The socio-economic Assessment produced to support the Olympic and Olympic legacy planning applications concluded that after the Games, the Olympic Park area alone will accommodate 11,270 permanent jobs as a direct result of the Games.

For the construction of the Olympic Park, venues and legacy facilities, the assessment estimated that 7,000 full-time equivalent construction jobs will be created.

These estimates do not take into account the other jobs that will be created as a result of the Games in sectors such as tourism, hospitality and food across the rest of London and the UK.

In addition, up to 70,000 volunteers and an estimated 3,500 operation staff will be needed to deliver the Games.

7 July Bombings

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost to London's economy of the bombings on 7 July; and if he will make a statement. [15117]

John Healey: It is not possible at present to make a firm estimate of the cost to London's and the United Kingdom's economy of the bombings on 7 July. The separation of the impact of the bombing from other variations in the London economy is complex. Furthermore, much of the economic data for the period following the bombing is not yet available.

Automatic Banking Machine

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what representations he has received from banks about fees for automatic banking machines; and if he will make a statement; [16284]

(2) if he will take steps to abolish fees on automatic banking machines. [16285]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Treasury officials regularly discuss issues relating to cash machine charges with members of the banking and financial services industry and other stakeholders. Cash machine charges have also been raised in meetings between Ministers and members of the banking and financial services industry.

The Government believe that people, particularly those on low incomes, should be able to access their cash free of charge. There are over 30,000 free cash machines in the UK. Over 96 per cent. of ATM withdrawals are made at such machines. Other options for obtaining free access to cash include 'cash back' and, for many account holders, free over-the-counter withdrawals at the Post Office.

The Government's response to the Treasury Committee's recent report on Cash Machine Charges (the Treasury Committee's Fifth Report of Session 2004–05) was published by the Treasury Committee on 19 July 2005. The response sets out Government policy on the matter in more detail. Like the Treasury Committee, we see charging cash machines as being a legitimate business model. The majority have been introduced recently in locations where previously there was no cash machine and where there would not be a sufficiently high number of transactions to support a free ATM. The Government does not believe there is evidence to suggest that free ATMs are under threat from charging machines as the number of free ATMs in the UK is still increasing. However, if evidence were found of a significant reduction in the number of free ATMs, then the Government would be concerned.

Mrs. James: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what discussions he has had with the banking and the financial services industry about cash machine charges; and if he will make a statement; [15923]

(2) what representations he has received about cash machine charges. [15924]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Treasury officials regularly discuss issues relating to cash machine charges with members of the banking and financial services industry and other stakeholders. Cash machine charges have also been raised in meetings between Ministers and members of the banking and financial services industry. The Government's response to the Treasury Committee's recent report on Cash Machine Charges (the Treasury Committee's Fifth Report of Session 2004–05) was published by the Treasury Committee on 19 July 2005. The response details Government policy on the matter.

Birth Numbers

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the percentage change in the number of births in each strategic health authority area in London has been over the last five years. [15595]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Pelling, dated 10 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking for the percentage change in the number of births in each Strategic Health Authority area in London over the last five years. (15595)

The figures shown in the table below reflect the current boundaries for Strategic Health Authorities which came into force on 1 April 2002.

Percentage change in the number of livebirths in London strategic health authority areas, 1999–2004

Area	*1999 to 2000*	*2000 to 2001*	*2001 to 2002*	*2002 to 2003*	*2003 to 2004*	*1999 to 2004*
North West London SHA	-0.8	-0.4	2.7	3.6	2.8	8.1
North Central London SHA	1.5	-1.5	1.9	3.9	2.9	8.8
North East London SHA	-0.2	1.1	1.6	4.4	-0.2	6.8
South East London SHA	-0.7	-2.1	1.2	5.4	2.1	5.9
South West London SHA	-3.7	0.2	-1.0	5.7	3.0	4.0
London	-0.8	-0.5	1.4	4.6	2.0	6.8

Note:
The percentage change from 1999 to 2004 is calculated as the difference in the numbers of births in 1999 and in 2004 as a proportion of all births in 1999.
Source:
ONS

Budget Document Cost

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost was of producing the summary leaflet Budget 2005, Investing in Our Future: Fairness and Opportunity of Britain's Hard-working Families; how much of the cost was accounted for by *(a)* printing and design, *(b)* copywriting and *(c)* distribution; how many copies were produced; how many were circulated unsolicited; and to whom. [15531]

John Healey: The total cost of producing the 2005 Budget summary leaflet was around £136,000. The printing cost was around £51,000 and the distribution cost was around £85,000. All costs were met from within the Treasury's departmental expenditure limits. There is no specific cost associated with writing the leaflet as it was created alongside the 2005 Budget Red Book.

The summary leaflet is designed to provide a concise and informative summary of the Budget. It is aimed at a wide audience, and so is distributed to various public organisations such as GPs' surgeries, libraries, post offices, schools and universities. Approximately 1.2 million leaflets were distributed in Budget 2005.

Burmese Goods

Vera Baird: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer at which *(a)* ports, *(b)* airports and *(c)* other entry points imports of goods from Burma enter the UK; and by what means of transport. [15638]

Dawn Primarolo: The list of *(a)* ports, *(b)* airports and *(c)* other entry points through which imports of goods from Burma enter the UK, including their means of transport, are shown in the following table.

Port of import for UK imports from Burma (country of dispatch) by mode of transport at the border: January 2004 to June 2005[1]

Port of import	*Mode of transport at the border*
(a) Belfast	Sea vessel (not vehicle on ferry)
Felixstowe	Sea vessel (not vehicle on ferry)
Grangemouth	Sea vessel (not vehicle on ferry)
Immingham	Sea vessel (not vehicle on ferry)
Kirkaldy	Sea vessel (not vehicle on ferry)
Liverpool	Sea vessel (not vehicle on ferry)
London (inc. Tilbury)	Sea vessel (not vehicle on ferry)
Medway	Sea vessel (not vehicle on ferry)
Southampton	Sea vessel (not vehicle on ferry)
Thamesport	Sea vessel (not vehicle on ferry)
Tyne	Sea vessel (not vehicle on ferry)
Felixstowe	Powered vehicle on sea-going vessel
Ramsgate	Powered vehicle on sea-going vessel
Southampton	Powered vehicle on sea-going vessel
(b) Belfast airport	Air transport
Birmingham airport	Air transport
Bristol airport	Air transport
East Midlands airport	Air transport
Glasgow airport	Air transport
London Heathrow	Air transport
Manchester airport	Air transport
Newcastle airport	Air transport
Southampton airport	Air transport
(c) Postal packages	Mail

[1] Figures for 2004–05 are provisional
Source:
Overseas Trade Statistics, HM Revenue and Customs

Capgemini Contract

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the projected cost of Capgemini's contract to deliver the external routing interface component system for Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs was at the time of its signing. [15094]

Dawn Primarolo: The external routing interface component system (ERIC) is being delivered as part of the ASPIRE contract that HM Revenue and Customs has with Capgemini. This was signed on 5 January 2004

and commenced on 1 July 2004. Work on ERIC was started by EDS under the Inland Revenue's previous IT contract. ERIC is part of the Modernising PAYE Processes for Customers (MPPC) programme. MPPC is a phased programme and the total business and IT projected costs for phase one, which incorporates ERIC, were £164 million, over six years which includes both the set up and ongoing maintenance costs.

The business case showed positive savings arise from the take up of on-line filing where staff will be released to work in other areas and make a very significant contribution to the Department's efficiency saving targets.

Carers

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* carers and *(b)* young carers of school age there are in (i) Suffolk and (ii) the parliamentary constituency of Bury St. Edmunds. [15126]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. David Ruffley, dated 10 October 2005:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many *(a)* carers and *(b)* young carers of school age there are in (i) Suffolk and (ii) the Parliamentary Constituency of Bury St Edmunds (15126).

Table 1 below shows the number of people in Suffolk and Bury St Edmunds who were providing unpaid care on Census day (29 April 2001). the data for the county of Suffolk has been taken from table KS08 in "Census 2001 Key Statistics for local authorities in England and Wales". The data for the Parliamentary Constituency of Bury St Edmunds has been taken from table KS08 in the "2001 Census Report for Parliamentary Constituencies". Both of these publications are available in the House of Commons Library.

We have interpreted the phrase 'young carers of school age' to mean any person providing unpaid care who was aged between 11 and 16 on Census day (29 April 2001). These figures, shown in Table 2 below, were not readily available in published Census data and were therefore drawn directly from the 2001 census databases.

Table 1—Number of people in Suffolk and Bury St. Edmunds providing unpaid care, Census day (29 April 2001)

Area	*All people*	*All people who provide unpaid care*
Suffolk	668,553	66,486
Bury St. Edmunds	98,982	9,370

Sources:
Table KS08 Census 2001 Key Statistics for local authorities in England and Wales and Table KS08 2001 Census Report for Parliamentary Constituencies

Table 2—Number of people aged between 11 and 16 in Suffolk and Bury St. Edmunds providing unpaid care, Census day (29 April 2001)

Area	*All people aged 11–16*	*All people aged 11–16 who provide unpaid care*
Suffolk	50,663	1,100
Bury St. Edmunds	7,160	150

Source:
2001 Census data.

Civil Servants

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what he forecasts the net change in civil service staffing levels to be by April 2008. [16468]

Mr. Des Browne: The 2004 Spending Review announced that efficiency measures would deliver a gross reduction in civil service and military posts in administrative and support functions of 84,150 posts by April 2008, of which 13,550 posts will be transferred to frontline service delivery. Civil service statistics are also affected by the Government's determination to increase staffing where needed, to deliver key frontline public services such as policing, criminal justice, teaching and healthcare, and by classification changes, such as the recent reclassification of Magistrates Courts Service employees as civil servants rather than local government employees.

Correspondence

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many overpayments of tax credits in *(a)* 2003–04, *(b)* 2004–05 and *(c)* 2005–06 to date, have been (i) disputed and (ii) written off; and what the value of the overpayments (A) disputed and (B) written off was in each year. [13878]

Dawn Primarolo: For the number of requests received in *(a)* 2003–04, *(b)* 2004–05 and *(c)* 2005–06, I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply I gave him and the hon. Member for Member for Lanark and Hamilton, East (Mr. Hood) on 4 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 100W and 107W. HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) received around 23,000 requests to write off overpayments of tax credits on the grounds of Official Error in June 2005. Because of the volume of new requests received recently, and the fact that cases are taking longer to deal with than expected, HMRC has been unable to respond to claimants as quickly as it would like, and it is now unlikely that the backlog will be cleared by the end of the summer.

As to overpayments written off, I refer to the reply I gave the hon. Gentleman on 6 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 437W. HMRC wrote off around 49,000 overpayments in June 2005 on the grounds of Official Error.

Information on the value of disputed tax credits overpayments is not kept.

For the amounts written off in each year, I refer to my answer's of 4 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 101W to the hon. Gentleman. HMRC wrote off around £55,734,000 in June 2005.

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what his Department's policy is for dealing with and responding to correspondence received in *(a)* Welsh, *(b)* Scots Gaelic and *(c)* Irish Gaelic; [14728]

(2) what facilities his Department has to deal with telephone inquiries in *(a)* Welsh, *(b)* Scots Gaelic and *(c)* Irish Gaelic. [14729]

John Healey: The Treasury uses translation services for correspondence received in languages other than English. The Department is able to deal with telephone calls only in English.

Council Tax

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether an estimate has been made of the number of appeals likely to arise following the council tax revaluation process; and what funding has been allocated to cover this. [15834]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer my right hon. Friend the Member for Bristol, South (Dawn Primarolo) gave to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) on 29 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1547W, and to my answer to the hon. Member for Meriden on 5 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 298W.

Crown Estate

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the staff costs of the Crown Estate's Communication Department were in 2004–05. [15172]

John Healey: The information requested is as follows.

Crown estate

Financial year	*Cost (£)*	*Number of permanent staff*
2004–05	131,480	3

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the Crown Estate spent on *(a)* public relations and *(b)* corporate hospitality in 2004–05 [15173]

John Healey: £443,100 (the non-staff cost of the Communications Department less the cost of production of the Annual Report and Accounts) and £9,570, respectively.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the impact of Crown Estate charges on the Scottish economy; and when he last discussed this with the Crown Estate. [15174]

John Healey: We have made no such assessment. The Crown Estate Commissioners exercise their statutory duties under the Crown Estate Act in the light of the commercial environment faced by Crown Estate tenants and the requirements of good management.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the Crown Estate has raised from dredging works in each of the last 10 years. [15294]

John Healey: The information is as follows:

£ million

Financial year	*Aggregate dredging*	*Contract dredging*	*Navigational dredging*	*Capital dredging*	*Total*
2004–05	13.4	0.06	0.09	0	13.55
2003–04	12.9	0	0.60	0	13.50
2002–03	13.3	0.20	0.06	0	13.56
2001–02	12.6	0	0.60	0	13.20
2000–01	13.7	0.10	0.04	0.075	13.92
1999–2000	13.1	0.20	0.004	0.003	13.31
1998–99	11.9	0.20	0	0.24	12.34
1997–98	12.4	0.86	0.01	0	12.47
1996–97	13.2	1.00	0.01	0.37	14.58
1995–96	11.9	0.90	0.01	0	12.81

Notes:
Aggregate—data relate to material used in the construction industry.
Contract dredging—relates to specific extraction for a specific job.
Navigational dredging—refers to material used that has been extracted from navigational works.
Capital dredging—refers to specific projects which are carried out to improve or create access to port facilities, often for larger ships. Material can be used or dumped.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 7 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1568W, on the Crown Estate, why this information is not collected. [15551]

John Healey: Financial information on piers and marinas in Scotland has historically been recorded differently from that relating to England and Wales.

However, the Crown Estate are taking steps to enable the information concerned to be available in future.

Departmental Contractors

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the contractors based in other EU member states that are providing services to his Department. [15449]

John Healey: The Treasury do not keep central records of the state in which contractors are based so the information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Websites

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what websites come under his Department's responsibility; and what the *(a)* cost and *(b)* number of visitors to those sites was in the last 12 months. [16025]

John Healey: The costs and traffic figures for each website operated by the Department for which the Chancellor of the Exchequer is responsible, during the 2004–05 financial year, were as follows.

Site address	*Direct costs (£)*	*Unique Visits*
www.hm-treasury.gov.uk	123,133	1,003,996
www.euro.gov.uk	21,000	223,108
www.ish.gov.uk	14,000	18,660
Sites costed within the www.euro.gov.uk figure:		
www.ges.gov.uk		35,340
www.wga.gov.uk		13,085
www.cuem.gov.uk		6,282
www.opg.gov.uk		7,049

The term "unique visits", refers to the number of different visitors logged during this period. These figures do not include repeat visits nor do they differentiate between different users coming from behind a shared firewall. For example, all Inland Revenue users would appear in the statistics as one visitor so the actual number of visitors is significantly higher.

Energy Efficiency

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of electricity used by buildings in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies came from renewable sources in each year from 1997. [15803]

John Healey: The data relating to HM Revenue and Customs (including the Valuation Office Agency) are as follows:

Energy efficiency

	Renewable energy (Kwh)	*Total consumption (Kwh)*[4]	*Percentage renewable*
1997–98*	—	—	—
1998–99*	—	—	—
1999–2000*	4,157,440	83,148,800	5
2000–01*	11,653,532	241,347,045	5
2001–02*	9,779,830	22,373,409	4
2002–03	2,561,584	248,957,119	9
2003–04	23,856,782	278,376,339	9
2004–05	112,442,500	417,879,906	27

Information for the Treasury relating to the period up to July 2004 was contained in the answers which the former Financial Secretary gave on 19 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 37W to the hon. Member for North Norfolk (Norman Lamb). All the electricity used by the Treasury since that date has been from renewable sources.

For the agencies responsible to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the information is as follows:

	Percentage
Debt management office	0
National Savings and Investments (NS&I)	[1]
Office for National Statistics (ONS)	
1997–2001	[2]
2001–02	9.0
2002–03	9.1
2003–04	9.2
2004–05	9.1
Royal Mint	0
OGCbuying.solutions	
Royal Liver Buildings, Liverpool	
2001–02	0
2002–03	100
2003–04	[3]
2004–06	100

[1] NS&I's operations are outsourced to Siemens Business Services (SBS). This includes responsibility for the supply of all fuel and utilities to the three buildings at NS&I's operational sites. NS&I have no direct influence over the purchase of electricity by SBS.
[2] Nil.
[3] 100 per cent. for six months, 60 per cent. for six months.

Equality and Diversity

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the Department has spent promoting equality and diversity in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [14656]

John Healey: The Treasury is fully committed to the equality and diversity agenda and has policies and processes in place to ensure that there is no unfair discrimination on any grounds. In the last five years the Treasury has supported internal employee-diversity networks, funded diversity and equality events in the Department; funded diversity awareness raising seminars; supported participants on corporate diversity programmes, diversity-proofed policies and management processes and participated in promotional work on the diversity agenda.

Direct staff costs on diversity issues have been in the region of £85 to £90,000 per annum over the last five years.

In addition the Treasury has spent the following amounts within the Department on promoting equality and diversity by awareness raising events and supporting staff with disabilities:

	£
2003–04	33,000
2004–05	46,000

Costs for the years before 2002–03 can only be retrieved from an earlier accounting system and would incur disproportionate cost.

The Treasury also introduced a childcare voucher scheme in January 2004 as part of the programme to promote equality and diversity. The cost of the first year (2004–05) was £120,000.

In addition to these direct costs, employees throughout the Department are directly involved in promoting diversity in the Department i.e. members of diversity support groups, disability champions, diversity champion and senior staff sponsors and in mainstreaming diversity issues in their policy work. Staff costs for this work are not available.

EU Budget

Mr. Brady: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his Department's forecasts are for the *(a)* UK rebate and the *(b)* net UK contribution to the EU under (i) the original Commission proposal for the next budget period and (ii) the Luxembourg Presidency proposal for the next budget period. [15738]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: As the Prime Minister pointed out in his statement to the House on 20 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 523–25, the Luxembourg Presidency proposal would have cost the UK £25 billion over the period of the next Financial Perspective. This estimate was calculated on the basis of European Commission figures. The Government's most recent forecast of the UK abatement and net contributions to the EC Budget, covering the period to 2007–08, is given in Table 3.2 (page 15) of the annual "European Community Finances" White Paper (Cm 6580) published on 23 June 2005. These forecasts are based on the current Financial Perspective, which runs to December 2006. For the period from January 2007, we simply up-rate the present arrangements to allow for inflation for public expenditure planning purposes. This in no way implies any assumption by the Government as to what the outcome of the ongoing Financial Perspective negotiations might be.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment his Department has made of the statistical robustness of the methods used by Eurostat to estimate and allocate extra-regio shares of off-shore GDP. [15739]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Graham Brady, dated 10 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning what assessment has been made of the statistical robustness of the methods used by Eurostat to estimate and allocate extra-regio shares of off-shore GDP. (15739)

In 2001, the Office for National Statistics, along with 5 other EU Member States, participated in a Task Force set up by Eurostat to review a number of quality issues concerning Regional Accounts. The Task Force recommended that extra-regio GDP should be shown as a distinct item in the accounts and that regional GDP per head figures should therefore exclude that part of GDP attributed to extra-regio. The ONS considers that the Task Force recommendation is easy to implement and makes statistical sense. Apart from the assessment of the Task Force, I am unaware of any other assessment specifically made of Eurostat's treatment of extra-regio shares of GDP.

Eurostat's current treatment of extra-regio GDP, however, does not comply with the Task Force's recommendation; they allocate estimates of extra-regio GDP to regions pro rata to their share of national GDP. The Office for National Statistics regards this treatment as inconsistent with the European System of Accounts (ESA) regulation of 1995 and the European Commission's NUTS regulation (2003). The latter regulation specifically identifies extra-regio as a separate statistical entity and therefore any relevant statistics should be shown separately.

I should say, to avoid any doubt, that there is no difference between the ONS and Eurostat regarding the method used to estimate extra-regio shares of GDP; the ONS in fact supplies Eurostat with extra-regio estimations based on the 1995 ESA regulation.

My predecessor wrote to the Director General of Eurostat earlier in the year to argue that the extra-regio component of GDP should not be allocated to the regions of the Member State, in keeping with the Task Force recommendation and the intention and spirit of the NUTS regulation.

Eurostat have agreed that our concerns are well-founded and demand further examination.

They consider the most appropriate action is to review the issue in the longer term as part of a wide-ranging review of Regional Accounts. They have identified late 2006/early 2007 as the best opportunity to commence such work.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the implications of the inclusion of extra-regio shares of off-shore GDP in the current EU budget proposals for *(a)* the UK net contribution and *(b)* the UK rebate. [15748]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: It is not possible to quantify the impact of the inclusion of offshore extra regio GVA on the UK net contribution and the UK abatement because Eurostat does not publish the data required for such a calculation.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will publish his Department's forecasts or models showing contributions to and receipts from the EU for each of the member states which joined in 2004 under *(a)* the original Commission proposal for the next budget period and *(b)* the Luxembourg presidency proposal for the next budget period. [15749]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The publication of forecasts of the contributions and receipts of other member states is a matter for their respective Governments.

EU Public Procurement Directive

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment the Office of Government Commerce has made of the implementation of the EU Public Procurement Directive 2004/18/EC by other EU countries; and if he will make a statement. [15339]

John Healey: The Office of Government Commerce has not made any assessment of the implementation of the Public Procurement Directive in other EU countries. All member states have to take appropriate measures to implement the directive by 31 January 2006 in accordance with their own procedures.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 27th June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1291W, on the Public Procurement Directive, how many responses, including confidential responses, to the Office of Government Commerce Public Procurement Directive consultation specifically referred to Article 35 of the EU Procurement Directive; and how many of these responses called for *(a)* a derogation and *(b)* no derogation from Article 45 of the directive. [15497]

John Healey: Article 35 of the new Public Sector Procurement Directive (2004/18/EC) concerns notices and is not related to the derogation in Article 45 of that directive.

On Article 45, the Office of Government Commerce received 21 responses referring to this Article during its 2004 consultation. Of this total, which includes confidential responses, one called for the derogation to be implemented and two called for it not to be implemented. Following my answer on 27 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1291W, copies of the responses to the consultation have been placed, except where confidentiality was requested, in the House Library. None of the three responses explicitly referring to implementation of the Article 45 derogation requested confidentiality.

Euro

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions he has had with EU counterparts on arrangements countries wishing to leave the euro might adopt in terms of the currency they use. [15664]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: No such discussions have taken place. The terms of membership of the single currency for member states without a derogation are set out in Article 4 and Articles 116 through to 124 of the Treaty establishing the European Community.

Floor Space

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total floor space area is of buildings owned and leased by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies. [15808]

John Healey: The available information is set out in the table.

Department/Agency	Total m^2
HMRC and VOA	[1]1,754,122
DMO	1,700
ONS	85,741
Royal Mint	46,233
OGC	13,625
GAD	2,898
HMT	31,200
NS&I	[2]113,125

[1] This figure is a total figure of space owned or leased by HMRC and VOA. At the commencement of April 2001, the Customs & Excise and Inland Revenue transferred a vast majority of their estate to the STEPS contractor, and have occupied the space since then under separate PFI arrangements.

[2] This space is owned by NS&I and leased to Siemens Business Services in Blackpool, Durham and Glasgow.

Freedom of Information

Pete Wishart: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many Freedom of Information Act 2000 requests have been answered by the Department; and in how many cases information was *(a)* wholly exempted, *(b)* partly exempted and *(c)* the requests were answered in full. [14956]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2248W by the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs.

Game Rearing Farms

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answers of 15 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 387W, and 16 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 553W, from the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on game-rearing farms, why some established game farms and other premises selling birds to other estates are not listed in the 2005 rating lists. [16504]

Dawn Primarolo: Valuation officers of the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) are responsible for the valuation of non-domestic property for rating purposes. Game farms are not exempt from rating but the respective valuation officers have some difficulty in identifying game farms as most of them are situated in remote rural areas and operate on land which is exempt from rating as agricultural land. Local billing authorities are responsible for notifying valuation officers when such changes take place, but this does not always occur.

The VOA has undertaken various initiatives over recent years to identify commercial game farms and to enter them in the non-domestic rating lists. Where the valuation officer is aware of a property that may be operating as a commercial game farm, and it is not assessed for non-domestic rates, then the circumstances will be investigated by the valuation officer and action will be taken to assess the game farm, if appropriate.

Gershon Review

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many civil servant posts have been cut in the implementation of the recommendations of the Gershon review. [15755]

Mr. Des Browne: In Budget 2005 the Chancellor announced that Departments have delivered the first 12,500 reduction in civil service posts, towards the Government's planned gross reduction of 84,000 civil service posts by 2008. Departments will report on further progress in their autumn performance reports.

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the value of the cost savings made under the recommendations of the Gershon report has been in each month since the report's publication. [15757]

Mr. Des Browne: In Budget 2005 the Chancellor announced that £2 billion of Gershon efficiency gains had already been achieved as at the end of 2004–05. Progress is not calculated on a monthly basis but departments will report on further progress in their Autumn Performance Reports.

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress is being made towards the savings identified in the Gershon review. [15758]

Mr. Des Browne: Efficiency targets were set out for each department in the Spending Review 2004 White Paper. In Budget 2005 the Chancellor announced that £2 billion of Gershon efficiency gains had already been achieved as at the end of 2004–05 and departments will report on further progress in their Autumn Performance Reports.

Gift Aid

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what regulations and guidance determine the number of occasions in each year when Gift Aid claims may be made by each charity; and what the average period of time was between the receipt of a Gift Aid claim and the consequent tax relief being passed to each charity, in the last year for which information is available; [16542]

(2) how many staff were required to administer Gift Aid claims for tax relief in the last year for which information is available; when HM Revenue and Customs' computer programmes were last upgraded to take account of the need to manage Gift Aid claims; and how many staff in *(a)* HM Revenue and Customs and *(b)* his Department are involved in the development or review of policy relating to Gift Aid; [16543]

(3) how many individual donations to charities attracted Gift Aid in the last year for which information is available; what the average *(a)* donation and *(b)* additional benefit to the charity as a result of tax relief was per donation; and what information is required to be forwarded to HM Revenue and Customs by charities with each claim. [16544]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In Budget 2005 the Chancellor announced the creation of an Integrated Business Stream within HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) for all activity with respect to charitable organisations and donations, including repayment of tax to charities. In 2004–05 the HMRC Charities Business Stream employed the equivalent of 20 full-time staff in administering 119,361 Gift Aid claims. Gift Aid claims are processed on a dedicated computer system. Minor updates to that system take place regularly. The last major update of the system was in 2000.

The HMRC Charities Business Stream employs the equivalent of three full-time staff in relation to the policy maintenance of all direct tax charitable reliefs, including Gift Aid.

There are two full-time staff in the Treasury's Charity Tax Unit, which is responsible for developing policy in relation to tax relief for giving to charity and the taxation of charities. Other officials also contribute to work in this area as part of their normal duties. It is not possible to quantify the resource devoted by the Treasury specifically to Gift Aid.

When a charity first makes a claim for the repayment of tax under Gift Aid, HMRC is required to complete various security checks. This can cause a delay in making the repayment. However, in 2004–05 93 percent. of subsequent claims were processed within 10 days.

The records maintained by HM Revenue and Customs do not identify individual donations. In 2004–05 there were 119,361 Gift Aid claims by charities with £625 million repaid in relation to these claims—an average repayment of £5,236 per claim. A single claim can relate to one donation or many thousands of donations.

A charity making a claim for a repayment under the Gift Aid scheme must complete HMRC form R68 (2000) giving the charity's details, the total amount of the claim and the period to which it relates. It must also complete a schedule—the R68 (New Gift Aid)—giving details of donors and their donations.

Gift Aid legislation does not place restrictions on how often a charity may reclaim tax under the Gift Aid scheme. In practice HMRC will normally accept claims made as frequently as a charity chooses. Where claims are for very small amounts HMRC may ask the charity to restrict claims to one per year.

Home Accident Surveillance System

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what mechanism the Office of National Statistics has put in place to replace the previous work undertaken by the Home Accident Surveillance System. [15927]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician. I have asked her to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. David Drew, dated 10 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking what mechanism the Office for National Statistics has put in place to replace the previous work undertaken by the Home Accident Surveillance System. (15927)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is not (and has never been) responsible for surveillance of accidents. I therefore have no plans for ONS to replace the system formerly operated by the Department for Trade and Industry.

Most serious accidents, in the home or elsewhere, result in patient contact with the National Health Service (NHS). The NHS are progressively putting in place electronic patient care records to reflect all clinical contacts with the NHS. These will include those relating to treatment for accidents. Aggregate figures will be available through the NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Home Owners

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many home owners there were in the UK in each year since 1979. [6407]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The stock of owner-occupied dwellings is set out in the following table. The stock figures included vacant dwellings and second homes, which are estimated to be about 3 to 4 per cent. of the total stock.

Since 1997 the number of homeowners has increased by 1 million. The Government have pledged to increase the number of homeowners by 2 million by 2010.

Estimated number of owner-occupied dwellings, United Kingdom, 1979–2004

	Number (thousand)
1979	11,564
1980	12,273
1981	12,442
1982	12,627
1983	13,010
1984	13,334
1985	13,637
1986	13,983
1987	14,363
1988	14,779
1989	15,205
1990	15,490
1991	15,532
1992	15,688
1993	15,848
1994	16,027
1995	16,239
1996	16,445
1997	16,675
1998	16,932
1999	17,183
2000	17,437
2001	17,701
2002	17,839
2003	18,054
2004	[1]18,306

[1] Provisional.

Notes:

1. Figures from 1979 to 1990 are as at 31 December each year.
2. Figures from 1991 to 2004 are as at 31 March each year.

Source:

Census figures and estimates of gains and losses between censuses.

Hong Kong Tax Rebate

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer why HM Revenue and Customs is unable to waive interest penalties with regard to the Hong Kong tax rebate. [16589]

Dawn Primarolo: Because of tax rebates made by the Hong Kong Government, some people found that they had additional income chargeable to tax in the UK. Under the normal tax legislation, interest (but not penalties) is chargeable on the UK tax paid after the statutory due date. There is no provision in the interest legislation to allow that charge to be waived.

Illegal Arms Shipments

John Battle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what investigations the Government are making into allegations of illegal arms shipments to the Democratic Republic of Congo by UK-based firms; and if he will make a statement. [15937]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs is not aware of any fresh allegations of UK entities involved in the illegal supply of arms to the Democratic Republic of Congo. HMRC are aware of allegations made in 2003, and recently repeated, involving arms flights between Albania and Rwanda. Inquiries were conducted but no evidence found of criminal offences by the UK companies named in the reports.

HMRC takes seriously its responsibility in the enforcement of international arms embargoes and conducts appropriate enquiries into allegations of illegal activity within the UK or by UK nationals overseas.

IMF

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps the UK has taken to encourage improved accountability of the International Monetary Fund to *(a)* governments and *(b)* parliaments of developing countries. [15716]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The UK is committed to enhancing the accountability of the IMF to all of its membership. As a practical example of this, for the past six years, the UK Government have published a report to Parliament on the activities of the IMF. In addition, the UK has pushed for wider transparency from the institution as a whole through, for example, increased publication of IMF documents which has facilitated more accountability by parliaments and civil society, including in developing countries.

As a practical way of increasing the voice of developing countries in the IMF and thus enhancing the responsiveness of the Fund to developing country concerns, the UK, with other donors, has also established a trust fund to build the analytical capacity of sub-Saharan African Executive Directors in order to better enable them to represent their constituencies more effectively at the IMF. The UK will also continue to argue for a package of further reforms and, in particular, an increase in the Basic Vote, to enhance the voice of developing countries within the IMF.

Income and Corporation Taxes Act

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the costs to business in the year 1 April 2004 to 30 March 2005 of the changes to schedule 28AA Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 introduced by the Finance Act 2004. [16175]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates of the financial implications of the changes for businesses in 2004–05 are set out in a Regulatory Impact Assessment "Reform of Corporation Tax—Reform of Rules on Transfer Pricing and Thin Capitalisation", published in March 2004. The changes included a new exemption from transfer pricing rules for most small and medium sized enterprises.

Infant Deaths

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many infant deaths there were in the United Kingdom in each of the last five years; and what the rate per 10,000 population was in each year. [16574]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. David Amess, dated 10 October 2005:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many infant deaths there were in the United Kingdom and the rate per 10,000. (16574)

The most recent year for which provisional figures are available is 2004. These figures are based on provisional data. There were 3,660 infant deaths in the United Kingdom in 2004. The rate was 51.1 per 10,000 live births.

Figures for earlier years, based on final data, are published in Population Trends and Health Statistics Quarterly (Table 2.1). These publications are available in the House of Commons Library. The provisional number of deaths for 2004 shown in these publications is incorrect. Correct provisional figure for 2004 will be published in the November edition of Health Statistics Quarterly.

Inheritance Tax

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people have applied for conditional exemption from inheritance tax in the last 12 months; and how this tax relief is being amended to take into account the implementation of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. [15100]

Dawn Primarolo: 31 new conditional exemption claims have been made in the 12 months to July 2005, of which 24 were concerned solely with chattels. Of the seven claims involving land, five were concerned with historic buildings and their immediate surroundings; one with land of scenic, historic or scientific interest; and one with both a historic building and its immediate surroundings, and land of scenic, historic or scientific interest.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act does not materially increase the rights of public access to much of the land covered by conditional exemption (and much the greatest part of it by value of the relief given). Where the Act does apply to land for which conditional exemption is claimed, we will continue to require materially higher standards of public access and land management as a condition of inheritance tax exemption than the Act alone would secure.

Irish Light Dues Subsidy

Tom Brake: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether the Irish light dues subsidy counts against the public sector borrowing requirement; [16053]

(2) what representations he has received from the Department for Transport regarding the light dues tax and the subsidy to the Republic of Ireland. [16054]

John Healey: HM Treasury has not received any representations from DfT on the collection of light dues or the funding of aids to navigation in Ireland. The operation of the General Lighthouse Fund is a matter for the Secretary of State for Transport in accordance with section 211 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995.

The General Lighthouse Fund, which receives light dues and pays for the maintenance of navigational aids, is classified as a UK public corporation and so its financial surplus serves to reduce the public sector net cash requirement.

Landfill Tax

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much revenue has been generated from the landfill tax, from landfill sites within the county of Bedfordshire in each year since 1997. [16401]

John Healey: Information on revenue from landfill tax can be found in the HM Revenue and Customs "Landfill Tax Bulletin", which can be found on the HM Revenue and Customs website:

http://www.uktradeinfo.co.uk/index.cfm?task = landfill

HM Revenue and Customs does not have a breakdown of landfill tax by county.

London Olympics

Susan Kramer: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of how much increased revenue from business taxes will accrue to the Treasury due to the 2012 Olympics. [15886]

Dawn Primarolo: No such estimate is currently available.

Media Relations

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the Department has spent on external media relations in each of the last 12 months. [14676]

John Healey: The Treasury has not spent any money on external media relations in the last year.

MRSA

Mr. Scott: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in how many patient deaths MRSA has been recorded as a contributing factor in *(a)* the King George hospital, Ilford, *(b)* Whipps Cross hospital, Leytonstone and *(c)* the Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust area in the last five years. [15093]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Scott, dated 10 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking in how many patient deaths MRSA has been recorded as a contributing factor in *(a)* the King George Hospital, Ilford, *(b)* Whipps Cross Hospital, Leytonstone and *(c)* the Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust in the last five years. (15093)

Special analyses of MRSA deaths are undertaken annually by the Office for National Statistics for England and Wales. These are published in Health Statistics Quarterly. The latest year for which such figures are available is 2003. The number of deaths in NHS hospitals where MRSA was a contributory factor in the last five years was 3,229 out of a total of 1,468,710 deaths in NHS hospitals.

Figures for individual hospital sites in 2002 were given in answer to a question from Andrew Mackinlay MP in Hansard, 22 July 2004, Column 471W. There were fewer than five deaths in each of King George Hospital, Ilford, and Whipps Cross Hospital, Leytonstone, in 2002. Figures for further years could only be provided at disproportionate cost. No figures are routinely available for NHS Trusts.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in how many patient deaths MRSA was recorded as a contributing factor in Kingston hospital in each of the last five years. [16681]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Edward Davey dated 10 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking in how many patient deaths MRSA was recorded as a contributing factor in Kingston Hospital in each of the last five years. (16681)

Figures for individual hospitals are not produced routinely every year. The latest, for 2002, were given in answer to a question from Andrew Mackinlay MP in Hansard, 22 July 2004, Column 471W. There were fewer than five deaths in Kingston Hospital in 2002. Figures for further years could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Special analyses of MRSA deaths are undertaken annually by ONS for England and Wales. These are published in Health Statistics Quarterly. The latest year for which such Figures are available is 2003. The number of deaths in NHS Hospitals where MRSA was a contributory factor in the last five years was 3,229 out of a total of 1,468,710 deaths in NHS Hospitals.

Myeloma

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of people suffering from myeloma in London in each year since 1997. [15133]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Sarah Teather, dated 10 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question concerning the number of people suffering from myeloma in London in each year since 1997. (15133)

Figures on the number of people who have been diagnosed with cancer and are still alive at a particular point in time are not routinely available.

The number of patients in London diagnosed with multiple myeloma in each year since 1997 are given in the table below. The most recent available figures are for the year 2002.

Number of newly diagnosed cases of multiple myeloma[1] in London[2], 1997–2002

	Number of cases
1997	336
1998	403
1999	393

Number of newly diagnosed cases of multiple myeloma[1] in London[2], 1997–2002

	Number of cases
2000	398
2001	371
2002	359

[1] From 1995 to 2002, International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) code C90.
[2] Government Office Region.
Source:
Office for National Statistics

National Insurance Fund

Anne Main: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how much surplus existed within the National Insurance Fund for the last period for which figures are available; what plans his Department has to reduce the surplus; and if he will make a statement; [16235]

(2) what the forecasted surplus in the National Insurance Fund is for 2005–06. [16236]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to Table 2 on page 7 of the Report by the Government Actuary (CM 6457) on the drafts of the Social Security Benefits Up-rating Order 2005 and the Social Security (Contributions) (Re-rating and National Insurance Funds Payments) Order 2005. The Report, published in February 2005, estimates the receipts of NICs and payments from the National Insurance Fund for the years 2004–05 and 2005–06 and the balance in the fund at the start and end of each year. The Fund provides for state retirement pensions and other contributory benefits, and the Government are determined to continue managing it prudently.

Non-oil Gross Value Added

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what methodology was used for estimation of the trend rate of growth of non-oil gross value added. [16081]

John Healey: The Treasury's methodology for estimating trend growth has been set out in detail in successive Treasury publications: 'Trend growth: prospects and implications for policy' (November 1999); 'Trend growth: recent developments and prospects' (April 2002); and 'Evidence on the UK economic cycle' (July 2005). Further information concerning the methodology for dating on-trend points can be found in 'Fiscal policy: public finances and the cycle' (March 1999).

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will publish for each quarter since Q1 of 1997 the estimate of trend growth of non-oil GVA over the current cycle *(a)* before and *(b)* after the ONS data revisions on 30 June 2005. [16082]

John Healey: Prior to the publication of the 2005 Blue Book dataset on 30 June 2005, average annual growth of non-oil GVA was estimated to have been 3.2 per cent. per quarter between the estimated on-trend points in 1997H1 and 2001Q3. On the basis of the revised dataset this is now estimated to be 3.3 per cent. However, given that HM Treasury estimates of trend growth are based on whole economic cycles, and that the current cycle is now estimated to have started in 1997H1 and not ended, it is not yet possible to give definitive estimates of trend growth over the current economic cycle.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will publish the standard errors on the estimate of trend non-oil GVA growth used to underpin chart 4.1 of the Treasury publication Evidence on the UK Economic Cycle. [16083]

John Healey: Estimates of the sampling and non-sampling standard errors for non-oil Gross Value Added (GVA) data published by the Office for National Statistics are not available. Hence, neither are estimates of the standard errors of the Treasury's trend non-oil GVA growth estimates.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will publish the estimates for each quarter since Q1 of 1997 of *(a)* actual non-oil gross value added, and *(b)* non-oil gross value added if it had grown according to trend, that underpin chart 3.1 of the Treasury publication Evidence on the UK Economic Cycle. [16226]

John Healey: The trend rate of growth assumed in chart 3.1 of the Treasury publication 'Evidence on the UK economic cycle' is 3.06 per cent. a year between the estimated on-trend points in 1997H1 and 2001Q3, as documented in table B2 of Budget 2005 (HC 372), and the assumed rate of 2¼ per cent. a year thereafter. The requested information, reproduced below, has since been superseded by revised ONS estimates of non-oil gross value added released on 30 June 2005 as shown in chart 4.1 of "Evidence on the UK economic cycle".

	Actual non-oil GVA	*Trend non-oil GVA as assumed in chart 3.1*
1997Q1	187795	187866
1997Q2	189000	189099
1997Q3	190470	190509
1997Q4	192771	191930
1998Q1	194305	193362
1998Q2	195608	194804
1998Q3	197606	196257
1998Q4	199228	197721
1999Q1	199457	199196
1999Q2	200604	200682
1999Q3	202254	202200
1999Q4	204540	203752
2000Q1	207372	205315
2000Q2	209154	206891
2000Q3	211142	208478
2000Q4	212050	210078
2001Q1	213786	211690
2001Q2	214332	213314
2001Q3	214951	214951
2001Q4	215950	216414
2002Q1	216597	217887
2002Q2	216736	219369
2002Q3	219210	220862
2002Q4	219625	222365
2003Q1	220627	223878
2003Q2	221699	225402
2003Q3	223896	226936
2003Q4	226384	228480
2004Q1	227769	230035
2004Q2	229929	231601
2004Q3	231422	233177
2004Q4	233176	234763

Opinion Surveys

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* subject matter and *(b)* dates were of opinion survey research undertaken by the Department and its agencies in the last 12 months; if he will place copies of the results of each survey in the Library; which companies were used in conducting the research; and how much each was paid. [14807]

John Healey: The Treasury has not undertaken any opinion survey research in the last 12 months.

Pensions

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the latest available figure is for the public sector pension liability; and by how much it has changed since 1997. [16667]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Total unfunded public service pension liabilities are estimated to be £460 billion as at 31 March 2004. (This is based on figures published in 2003–04 Resource Accounts and Accounts for 2004–05 have still to be finalised and published.) Figures for 1997 on the same basis are not available.

Petroleum Fuel Duty

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many points of collection there are for petroleum fuel duty; and what percentage of the total collected in 2004–05 came from *(a)* the top 10 and *(b)* the top 20 oil companies. [15146]

John Healey: Hydrocarbon oils become liable to duty when they are imported or, if produced in the UK, when they are delivered for home use from a refinery. There are therefore no fixed points of collection for oils duty.

The percentages of the total excise duty on petrol paid by the top 10 and 20 oil companies in the UK are given in the following table.

Petroleum fuel duty

Percentage

	Top 10 oil companies	*Top 20 oil companies*
2004–05	97.6	99.3

PFI

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) pursuant to the answer of 8 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 571W, on the Private Finance Initiative, what the total value of assets and liabilities is for each of the listed private finance initiatives and public private partnerships that are recorded on the Government balance sheet; [16321]

(2) what the accounting treatment is of assets and liabilities for each of the listed private finance initiatives and public private partnerships; and whether this treatment is compliant with *(a)* UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practices and *(b)* International Financial Reporting Standards; [16322]

(3) what proportion of assets and liabilities for each of the listed private finance initiatives and public private partnerships is recorded on the Government balance sheet. [16323]

John Healey: My earlier answer indicated that the Treasury's only PFI project is for its office building at 1 Horse Guards Road. Details of the project are on the Treasury website:

http://www.hmtreasury.gov.uk/about/about_building/about_goggs_goggs.cfm

The accounting treatment and asset/liability values are disclosed in note 13 on pages 41 to 43 of the Treasury's 2004–05 resource accounts:

http://www.hm.treasury.gov.uk/media/3A6/1E/resource_accounts_2004-5.pdf

The accounting treatment for this PFI project is compliant with UK GAAP. There is currently no International Financial Reporting Standard on PFI projects.

PFI Projects

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what steps he is taking to ensure that private finance initiative projects for which his Department is responsible create the minimum of environmental damage; [15810]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the *(a)* sustainability and *(b)* environmental impacts of private finance initiative (PFI) projects for which his Department is responsible; and what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the PFI process in delivering environmentally-sustainable projects; [15811]

(3) what steps he is taking to make private finance initiative contracts for which his Department is responsible more accountable and transparent in terms of environmental sustainability. [15812]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the Treasury's Sustainable Report and Action Plan which was published on the department's website in March of this year.

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/

Planning Gain Supplement

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will make a statement on the Government's plans to introduce a planning gain supplement; whether primary legislation will be required; and what the timetable for its introduction is; [15221]

(2) whether the introduction of a planning gain supplement is expected to be revenue-neutral. [15224]

John Healey: As set out in the March 2005 Economic and Fiscal Strategy Report, the Government will respond to the recommendations in the Barker Review of Housing Supply later this year.

Population Statistics

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the population of *(a)* the parliamentary constituency of Mid-Bedfordshire and *(b)* Bedfordshire local education authority has been in each year since 1997. [16634]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Nadine Dorries dated 10 October 2005:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking what the population of *(a)* the parliamentary constituency of Mid-Bedfordshire and *(b)* Bedfordshire Local Education Authority has been in each year since 1997. (16634)

Mid-year population estimates are not available for Parliamentary Constituencies. I have therefore provided figures taken from the 2001 Census.

The first table shows the number of people living in Mid-Bedfordshire constituency on Census day (29 April 2001). The figures have been extracted from Table KS01 on the CD supplement to the Census 2001 Census Area Statistics for Parliamentary Constituencies in England and Wales, which is available in the House of Commons Library.

The second table shows the annual population estimates for Bedfordshire from 1997 to 2004 (the latest year for which data are available). Bedfordshire Local Education Area (LEA) is the current county of Bedfordshire (i.e. it does not include the Unitary Authority of Luton).

Mid-Bedfordshire parliamentary constituency

Area	*All People*
Mid-Bedfordshire	92,855

Source:
2001 Census Report for parliamentary constituencies

Bedfordshire county

All People	*thousands*
1997	366.5
1998	368.9
1999	374.4
2000	378.2
2001	382.1
2002	384.6
2003	388.6
2004	392.2

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Property Sales

Mr. Hands: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many residential property sales were recorded in the most recent year for which figures are available in the *(a)* £110,001 to £120,000, *(b)* £120,001 to £130,000, *(c)* 240,001 to £250,000, *(d)* £250,001 to £260,000, *(e)* £490,001 to £500,000 and *(f)* £500,001 to £510,000 brackets. [15753]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The latest estimates for the number of residential sales in England and Wales are for 2004, and are given in the following table.

Thousands

Value Range	*Number of sales*
£110,001 to £120,000	75
£120,001 to £130, 000	81
£240,001 to £250,000	44
£250,001 to £260,000	8
£490,001 to £500,000	4
£500,001 to £510,000	[1]

[1] indicates that the number of sales was below 500.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total sale value of newly-built residential properties in the United Kingdom was in the most recent year for which figures are available. [15754]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Estimated total value of sales of newly-built residential properties is available for England and Wales for 2004 and the estimate amounts to £22.7 billion. This information is not available at the UK level.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much VAT was raised in the most recent year for which figures are available from refurbished residential properties in the United Kingdom. [15756]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs does not collect data on VAT from individual goods and services.

Public-Private Partnerships

Mike Penning: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on measures being taken by his Department to ensure the definition of public-private partnerships contracts as public works contracts rather than concessions under European law; what challenges have been made to contract terms; and what regulations are planned at EU level to define this branch of regulatory law. [16660]

John Healey: The consideration of the treatment of public private partnerships (PPPs) was raised in the European Commission's Green paper on public-private partnerships and community law on public contracts and concessions in May 2004.

HMG response in September 2004 to the paper was that separate legislation to cover PPPs whether awarded as contracts or concession contracts would be unnecessary, as the existing public procurement directive (2004/18/EC) largely covers such contracts, apart from services concession contracts, which could be covered by amendments to this directive.

The Commission will be publishing a response to their consultation by The end of 2006.

Rail Employment

Edward Miliband: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people are employed in the rail sector in Doncaster, North. [15104]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Edward Miliband, dated 10 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about employment in the rail sector in Doncaster North. (15104)

The 2001 Census gives the number of people resident in Doncaster North and employed in the rail sector as 415.

A more recent figure based on the Annual Local Area Labour Force Survey is broadly consistent with the Census figure but is based on too small a sample to provide a reliable updated estimate.

Refurbishment Projects

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the refurbishment projects in his Department that *(a)* are in progress and *(b)* will start in the next six months; what action is being taken to ensure that these will procure timber from legal and sustainable sources; and whether guidance will be issued to contractors on each of these projects ensuring that the timber used on site during refurbishment comes from legal and sustainable sources. [15794]

John Healey: The Treasury has no refurbishment projects in progress or due to start in the next six months.

Saulet & Co.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Land Transfer Returns Certificates will be issued for the balance of development no. 401908146MZ, which Saulet & Company applied for on 25 May 2005. [16494]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: HM Revenue and Customs is statutorily debarred from disclosing publicly information relating to the tax affairs of individuals or public and private sector bodies. I have, however, written to the hon. Gentleman about the issue of the certificates concerned.

Scottish Constituencies

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is his policy to provide statistics relating to Scottish constituencies in terms of *(a)* Westminster and *(b)* Scottish Parliament boundaries. [15642]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Stewart Hosie, dated 10 October 2005:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking whether it is government policy to provide statistics relating to Scottish Constituencies in terms of *(a)* Westminster and *(b)* Scottish Parliament boundaries. (15642)

The Office for National Statistics aims to provide data for any geography which can be built up from its basic geographical building block. Where the statistics are based on electoral wards it should be possible to provide such data for both types of Scottish Constituencies.

In practice there is much Labour Force Survey, Claimant Count and Annual Business Inquiry data that is already available for both types of Scottish Constituencies. There is very little historical data as yet available for the new Scottish / Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies. However investigations are in progress to determine how a best fit can be made to the wards used in the 1991 census that would then enable a 10 year back series to be created.

Security Contracts

Mr. Henderson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much was spent by his Department and public bodies and agencies for which he is responsible on security contracts with Group 4 Securicor in 2004-05; and if he will list *(a)* the nature and location of services provided and *(b)* the start and end dates of such contracts. [R] [13525]

John Healey: HM Revenue and Customs and the Office of Government Commerce have contracts with Group 4 Securicor, the details of which are shown in the following table. None of the other public bodies for which the Chancellor is responsible (that is, HM Treasury, the Royal Mint, National Savings and Investments, Office for National Statistics, Government Actuary's Department, Valuation Office Agency, Debt Management Office, OGCbuying.solutions and the Statistics Commission) have had contracts with Group 4 Securicor in the past financial year. In some cases, their contractors may have subcontracted certain services to Group 4 Securicor, but in such arrangements, the costs, the services provided and the subcontract start and end dates are matters for the main contractors.

Name of body	*Location*	*Nature of services provided*	*Contract start date*	*Contract end date*	*Amount spent in 2004–05 (£000)*
HMRC	Newcastle	Manned guarding at HMRC Newcastle Estate	1996–97	October 2004	956
	UK wide	Cash handling	1 April 2004	31 March 2006	
OGC	Leeds	Keyholding and call-out response	30 June 2004	31 March 2006	257
		Security, receptionists	1 April 2004	30 November 2005	
		Access control	1 April 2004	31 March 2006	
	Edinburgh	Keyholding and call-out response	1 November 2003	31 March 2006	
	Norwich	Access control, CCTV	1 April 2001	31 March 2006	
		Security, receptionists, reprographics, post room, handyman, porterage	1 December 2000	30 November 2005	
	London	Access control; CCTV	1 April 2002	31 March 2006	

Solar Energy

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will introduce tax incentives for the installation of solar energy capacity in domestic dwellings; and if he will make a statement. [16587]

John Healey: The Government recognise the important contribution that renewable energy will make to its energy policy objectives. Accordingly, the Government have announced significant support for renewable and low carbon energy sources comprising capital grants and support for research and development

totalling some £500 million. It has also introduced the Renewables Obligation which ensures all electricity suppliers produce a specified and increasing amount of energy from renewable sources. The Renewables Obligation is expected to be worth £1 billion a year to the industry by 2010. Within this context, over £20 million of Government funding have been allocated since 2002 under the Solar Photovoltaic Major Demonstration Programme to medium and large scale solar projects, with the Minister for Energy recently announcing funding of £1.5 million for 18 new solar installations across the UK.

All consideration of fiscal measures is carried out as part of the Budget process.

Stamp Duty

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average level of stamp duty charged on a Right-to-Buy council property is. [15243]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The latest available data are for 2003–04 and relates to the average (interpreted as the mean) price for sales of Right-to-Buy council properties in England. The estimated mean price for the sale of a Right-to-Buy (RTB) property is £43,000, which would mean there being no Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) on the sale of a property selling for that price. However the mean SDLT payable would not be zero if there were RTB properties which sold for more than the SDLT threshold (£60,000 in 2003–04). An estimate for the mean SDLT payable is not available although the median SDLT payable will be zero.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent *(a)* representations he has received from and *(b)* meetings he has had with (i) the Law Society Stamp Duty Complaints Group and (ii) others concerning complaints about stamp duty; what initiatives he has implemented as a result; and if he will make a statement. [16491]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Senior officials from HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) have had regular meetings with the President and members of both the Law Society of England and Wales and the Law Society of Scotland to discuss all aspects of Stamp Duty Land Tax, including complaints. HMRC have launched a number of initiatives, including a review of the reasons why land transaction returns are rejected. The results of this review have been shared with the representative bodies and details are available on the Stamp Taxes website at:

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/so/sdlt8.htm

HMRC Stamp Taxes are seeking to work very closely with key customers and stakeholders to improve the administration of Stamp Duty Land Tax wherever possible.

In a statement issued on 7 September 2005 by the Law Society, Kevin Martin, President of the Law Society said:

"I'm pleased the Revenue has shown a willingness to work with us. If the changes they have announced deliver real improvements to solicitors and their clients we will have solid foundations to build on for our future relationship."

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many complaints he has received about the Stamp Duty Office in each quarter since 1 December 2003. [16492]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Information from April 2004 is given in the table. Earlier information is not available.

Quarter ending	*Number*
June 2004	22
September 2004	18
December 2004	20
March 2005	38
June 2005	72
September 2005	61

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many Stamp Duty submissions are waiting to be processed at the *(a)* Manchester and *(b)* Newcastle offices; and what plans he has to improve the service. [16493]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The following table shows the items on hand in the HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) office at Newcastle at the start of Monday 3 October.

The SDLT 1 is the land transaction return.

The SDLT 2 is a supplementary form required where there are more than two vendors or purchasers for a transaction.

The SDLT 3 is a supplementary form where additional information is required to identify the relevant property or the transaction involves more than one property.

The SDLT 4 is a supplementary form where additional information is required about the transaction, for example, the purchaser is a company, the interest purchased is non-residential, or in some lease transactions.

The SDLT 5 is the certificate issued when the land transaction return has been completed correctly and any tax due has been paid. The work on hand refers to cases where a duplicate certificate has been requested by the purchaser or their solicitor.

The SDLT 8 is issued where information on the land transaction return is missing or unclear or there is contradictory information.

SDLT	312
SDLT 2, SDLT 3 and SDLT 4	545
SDLT 5	386
SDLT 8	174

This represents approximately one day's work.

The HMRC office at Manchester had 616 letters on hand regarding penalty appeals on Monday 3 October. HMRC will continue to keep their resources under review.

Since 26 August, it has been possible to file SDLT returns on-line directly into the SDLT automated system. Using this service removes the need to use post,

and (because of the in-built checks) has a very high probability of returns being correct 'first time' and results in an instant acknowledgement that the return has been accepted. HMRC is working with representative bodies to encourage the use of the service.

Stamp Duty Office

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many calls have been taken on the Stamp Duty Office Helpline in each quarter since 1 December 2003; what the average time taken to answer a call was in each quarter; how many operators on average staff the Helpline at any one time; what plans he has to improve the service; and if he will make a statement. [16495]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The following table shows the number of calls taken on the Helpline since 1 December 2003.

	Calls
December 2003 (one month only)	38,789
Quarter end March 2004	165,057
Quarter end June 2004	107,972
Quarter end September 2004	110,910
Quarter end December 2004	97,450
Quarter end March 2005	116,500
Quarter end June 2005	115,751
Quarter end September 2005	126,648

HMRC receive many calls to the Helpline on a variety of subjects and call length and time taken to answer varies. There have been delays in answering calls but they are currently answering calls within five minutes. Each call lasts on average between three and four minutes. Staffing levels have varied and figures are not available for the period requested. There are currently approximately 25 to 30 staff on the Helpline each day. Since 1 December 2003 HMRC have constantly monitored the Helpline and made various improvements. In June 2005 a new interactive voice response (IVR) options system was introduced to route calls to the operator most able to assist.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average time taken by the Stamp Duty Office to process submissions was in the last period for which figures are available; and what the average time was immediately before 1 December 2003. [16496]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In November 2003, 29.4 percent. of stamp duty applications were processed within two working days, 50.9 percent. between three and five days and 19.74 percent. over five days. Our August 2005 statistics covering the returns received onto our database show that 71.2 percent. were processed within two working days, 20.2 percent. between three and five days and 8.6 percent. over five days. Once included on our database, our system triggers the printing of certificates or requests for further information at our output handling centre for dispatch to our customers and their agents as appropriate.

Stamp Duty/Renovation Allowance

Mike Penning: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on challenges to the *(a)* stamp duty exemption scheme and *(b)* business premises renovation allowance under state aid rules. [15973]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The European Commission approved the stamp duty exemption scheme for non-residential property in disadvantaged areas as a state aid compatible with the common market on 20 January 2003. Following announcement in Budget 2005, the scheme was ended for property transactions on or after 17 March 2005. The business premises renovation allowance scheme was notified to the European Commission as a state aid in late 2004 and will be introduced once approval has been obtained.

Sustainable Development

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what steps have been taken by his Department to review its arrangements for public reporting of its sustainable development impacts; [15785]

(2) what progress has been made on his Department's sustainable development strategy; [15786]

(3) what he has identified as the most significant sustainable development impacts in relation to the operation of his Department's estate pursuant to the framework for sustainable development on the Government Estate; [15787]

(4) what arrangements his Department has in place to report publicly on its key sustainable development impacts; [15788]

(5) which parts of the Department's estate are not covered by the commitments set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate; [15791]

(6) what assessment he has made of recent significant sustainable development impacts in relation to the operation of the Department's estate; [15792]

(7) what targets he has set for improving energy efficiency within the Department; and what measures are in place to work towards achieving these targets. [15802]

John Healey: The Treasury's Sustainable Development Report and Action Plan, which include the Department' s performance against the Framework targets set, were published on the Department's website in March of this year.

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/about/about_sustdevel.cfm

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will list the meetings at which his Department has been represented regarding the delivery of sustainable development across Government co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-committee of Green Ministers; [15789]

(2) what *(a)* meetings his Department's Green Minister has attended and *(b)* work the Green Minister has undertaken in the last three months in an official capacity within that role. [15790]

John Healey: Following the General Election in May, the Cabinet Sub-Committee of Green Ministers (ENV(G) was replaced by the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Sustainable Development in Government (EE(SD) whose members are departmental Sustainable Development Ministers. I am the Treasury's Sustainable Development Minister.

Treasury Ministers regularly meet a wide range of individuals and organisations as part of the process of policy development and analysis, including on sustainable development and environmental issues. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's usual practice to provide details of all such meetings. Treasury meetings are conducted in accordance with the Ministerial Code and the Civil Service Code, as appropriate.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what remit relating to sustainable development is *(a)* required and *(b)* undertaken by the bodies for which his Department is responsible; and if he will make a statement. [15797]

John Healey: The joint sustainable development statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Departments and agencies is published on the Treasury's public website.

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/

Swiss Banks

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions he has had with the Financial Services Authority on the operation of Swiss banks with London offices. [15144]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: There have been no discussions between the Chancellor and the FSA regarding the operation of Swiss banks with London Offices.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what regulatory systems are in place to ensure the good governance of Swiss banks operating in the UK; and what systems are in place to ensure they are not used for *(a)* money-laundering and *(b)* criminal purposes. [15145]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Financial Services Authority regulates all banks operating in the UK and its handbook includes provisions to guard against money laundering. All banks operating in the UK are also subject to the Money Laundering Regulations 2003 and the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

Tax Avoidance

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what further legislation the Government plan to bring forward to tackle tax avoidance. [15275]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government are committed to protecting the tax system against tax avoidance when and where necessary, ensuring that all taxpayers pay their fair share, protecting revenues for essential public services. Since 1997, the Government have taken a series of steps to prevent abuse of the tax system through structural reforms that make the system less vulnerable, closing loopholes in the law and improving the way HM Revenue and Customs delivers its compliance function. The Government continue to keep this under review.

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many tax avoidance schemes have been notified to Revenue and Customs to date under Part 7 of the Finance Act 2004 and related regulations; [16167]

(2) what estimate he has made of the tax revenue which has been lost to date as a result of tax avoidance schemes which have been notified to Revenue and Customs under Part 7 of the Finance Act 2004 and related regulations. [16174]

Dawn Primarolo: Up to 30 June 2005 there had been 524 direct tax disclosures under Part 7 of the Finance Act 2004. In some cases substantially the same scheme may have been disclosed more than once by different promoters, but it is not always possible to establish this before investigations into the scheme users' tax returns have been undertaken. The number of promoters who made disclosures in that period is 100. These figures attest to the success of the disclosure rules.

Promoters of schemes are not required to notify HM Revenue and Customs how much tax a scheme is designed to avoid. Moreover, the disclosure rules are designed to help HM Revenue and Customs prevent such loss. The disclosure rules are a success, and disclosures have informed a number of anti-avoidance measures in this year's Finance Bills.

Tax Credits

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit claimants there have been in the parliamentary constituency of Mid-Bedfordshire since the scheme began broken down by those *(a)* underpaid, *(b)* overpaid and *(c)* paid the correct amount. [16626]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates for 2003–04 of the numbers of in-work families with tax credits awards, including information on overpayments and underpayments by constituency, based on final family circumstances and incomes for 2003–04 are published in "Child and Working Tax Credits. Finalised Awards 2003–04 Geographical Analysis." This publication and provisional estimates for the number of in-work families by constituency with tax credit awards as at selected dates in 2004–05 are available on the HMRC website at:

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/cwtc-geog-stats.htm.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has instructed HM Revenue and Customs to suspend efforts to reclaim overpayment of tax credits until the families involved have been able to make representations to Inland Revenue officials. [10215]

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the oral statement of 12 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 720, on tax credits (1) what the process is for suspending the recovery of a tax credit overpayment in disputed cases; whether the award will be paid at the new rate of entitlement but not further reduced to recover the overpayment in circumstances where the overpayment arises as a result of *(a)* official

error, *(b)* a change of circumstances and *(c)* a rise in income above the disregard; whether the amount of the overpayment will increase in value as a result of (i) interest charged by Revenue and Customs and (ii) the award of additional tax credits if the dispute is resolved in Revenue and Customs' favour; and when this process will begin; [13840]

(2) if he will list the options for suspension of the recovery of tax credit overpayments being tested. [13841]

Dawn Primarolo: The commitment is that in cases of genuine hardship where the recovery of overpayments is disputed, recovery is suspended while the dispute resolved. HMRC are considering technical options which will allow them to meet this commitment.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the value was of tax credit payments made to people with awards whose incomes were in excess of *(a)* £50,000, *(b)* £52,000, *(c)* £55,000 and *(d)* £57,500 in (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05. [13925]

Dawn Primarolo: The aggregate 2003–04 entitlement for in-work families with such incomes were as follows. These figures have been prepared on the same basis as those given in my reply to the hon. Member for Tatton (Mr. Osborne) on 14 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1172–73W.

(a) £42 million

(b) £21 million

(c) £8 million

(d) £2 million

Figures for 2004–05 will not be available until all the awards are finalised.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many hours of overtime have been worked by staff in the tax credit office in each of the last four years; and what the cost of this overtime was; [14342]

(2) how many people *(a)* left Inland Revenue's tax credit office and *(b)* were recruited to permanent posts in the tax credit office in each of the last four years; what proportion of tax credit staff are employed on a temporary basis or on contracts of less than a year; and what the average pay is for staff working in (i) the tax credit office and (ii) HM Revenue and Customs as a whole. [14343]

Dawn Primarolo: The number of hours of overtime worked by staff in the Tax Credit Office (TCO) and the cost of that overtime, in each of the last four years, was:

	Hours	*Cost (£ million)*
2001–02	98,351	2.66
2002–03	104,551	2.375
2003–04	95,836	2.34
2004–05	78,255	1.693

For the numbers of permanent staff leaving the TCO and the number recruited to permanent posts in the last four years:

	(a) Leavers	*(b) Entrants*
2001–02	189	461
2002–03	195	154
2003–04	171	46
2004–05	53	53

Around 7 per cent. of TCO staff are on fixed term appointments.

(i) The average pay for staff working in TCO is £1,8662.00; and

(ii) The average pay for staff working in HM Revenue and Customs as a whole is £19,827.61.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost per minute is to callers using the Inland Revenue tax credits telephone helpline; what payment is made to Revenue and Customs by British Telecommunications in respect of revenue sharing for the income from the helpline call costs; and if he will make a statement. [15725]

Dawn Primarolo: The tax credits Helpline number is an 0845 number charged at local rates or Lo call. Information is not available on the cost per minute to callers using the tax credits Helpline—they will vary depending upon their service provider.

HMRC do not receive any payments from any service provider in respect of this service.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he expects to reply to the letter dated 22 June 2005 from the hon. Member for Nottingham, North regarding the overpayment of tax credits to Mrs. L. and Mr. K. Bennett of Barn Close, Nottingham; and if he will make a statement. [16356]

Dawn Primarolo: I did so on 23 September 2005.

Teenage Pregnancy

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many instances of teenage pregnancy there have been in Suffolk in each of the last eight years, broken down by local authority area. [15124]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. David Ruffley, dated 10 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking how many instances of teenage pregnancy there have been in Suffolk in each of the last eight years, broken down by local authority area. (15124)

The latest year for which information is available is 2003. Figures for local authority areas in Suffolk from 1996 to 2003 are shown in the attached table.

Number of teenage conceptions in Suffolk by local authority area, 1996 to 2003

	1996	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*[1]
Suffolk	421	393	439	420	363	351	407	408
Babergh	43	41	42	48	42	33	44	42
Forest Heath	36	34	33	29	23	28	22	29
Ipswich	103	105	126	121	101	100	107	104

Number of teenage conceptions in Suffolk by local authority area 1996 to 2003

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003[1]
Mid Suffolk	38	37	27	37	29	34	40	52
St. Edmundsbury	57	47	68	48	45	40	37	46
Suffolk Coastal	61	58	62	56	38	44	39	52
Waveney	83	71	81	81	85	72	118	83

[1] Figures for 2003 are provisional.

Timber

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans his Department has to fund the maintenance of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [15793]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given by the Minister of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs today.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether his Department's procurement policy includes timber used on and in the construction of departmental building projects; and if he will make a statement; [15795]

(2) what assessment is made *(a)* of the environmental impact and *(b)* against sustainable development criteria of bids made for contracts awarded by his Department; who makes such assessments; and whether these assessments are published. [15796]

John Healey: The procurement policy of HM Treasury and HM Revenue and Custom's, covers timber used on and in the construction of departmental building projects. HMRC and HMT's procurement policy pays proper regard to environmental issues while still securing best value for money. Assessments of environmental impact and against sustainable development criteria are made by the Departments' procurement staff, who consider environmental issues at the start of a procurement. Details of any environmental requirements that suppliers need to be aware of will always be included in our invitation to tender documents. To support the general greening Government policy, we would expect a potential supplier to have environmental management systems in place on the lines of ISO 14001, which is increasingly being adopted by the more responsible sections of industry.

Video-conferencing

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many video-conferencing units are installed in *(a)* the Department and *(b)* each agency of the Department; what percentage of offices have these facilities in each case; and what plans there are to increase the number. [15809]

John Healey: The information requested is as follows:

HM Treasury

The Treasury's five video conferencing (VC) units provide facilities for all the Department's staff (ie 100 per cent.). There are no plans to increase the number of VCs.

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)

HMRC currently have 152 VC units and will have 300 by 2007. They are sited to meet demand and as a result multiple VC units are located where there are high concentrations of HMRC staff in locations such as London, Telford, Newcastle, Southend, Liverpool and Manchester. Quoting a percentage figure for the number of HMRC offices which have VC units would not give a meaningful measure of access or usage.

Royal Mint

One VC unit is available at the Royal Mint's site (100 per cent.). There are no current plans to acquire more VCs.

Office of Government Commerce (OGC)

There are 18 VC units serving all of OGC's offices (100 per cent.). There are no current plans to acquire more VCs.

Office for National Statistics

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has a total of six VC units, with two each at its offices in London and Newport, and one each at its offices in Titchfield and Southport. Therefore 100 per cent. of ONS sites have this facility. We have a provisional plan to increase this by a further facility at the Titchfield site in the next year.

National Savings and Investments

Four VC units cover all of National Savings and Investments sites (100 per cent.). There are no plans to extend VC facilities.

Valuation Office Agency

The VOA has six VC units, representing approximately 7 per cent. of our offices with this facility. The agency intends to increase this number to around 12 VC units within a further six-month period.

Debt Management Office

The UK Debt Management Office has no VC units and currently has no plans to install any in the future.

Government Actuary's Department

GAD does not have any VC units installed. There are currently no plans to install this feature unless demands arise.

Water, Sewerage and Electricity

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what change there was in water consumption by his Department between 2002 and 31 March 2005. [15800]

John Healey: There has been no significant change in water consumption in 1 Horse Guards Road, the only building which is occupied by HM Treasury, during the period in question.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer at which non-office sites on his Department's estates he has identified opportunities for significant water savings. [15798]

John Healey: None. The Treasury has no non-office sites.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on (i) water and sewerage services and (ii) electricity in each year from 1997. [15801]

John Healey: The information requested is in the following tables:

Table 1: Water and sewerage services

£

	HMRC and VOA	HMT	OGC	ONS	GAD	DMO	NS&I	Royal Mint
1997–98	[1]—	52,000	[2]—	[3]—	[4]—	[5]—	[6]—	187,497
1998–99	[1]—	56,000	[2]—	147,000	[4]—	[5]—	[6]—	187,027
1999–2000	[1]—	44,000	[2]—	83,000	[4]—	[5]—	[6]—	166,210
2000–01	[1]—	36,000	34,000	119,000	[4]—	[5]—	[6]—	152,177
2001–02	[1]—	44,000	24,000	115,000	[4]—	[5]—	[6]—	153,464
2002–03	1,720,000	15,000	20,000	100,000	[4]—	[5]—	[6]—	136,356
2003–04	2,490,000	19,000	12,000	101,000	[4]1,500	[5]—	[6]—	161,511
2004–05	2,398,757	13,242	19,000	90,000	2,185	[5]—	[6]—	177,652

[1] The information for years 1997–98, 1998–99, 2000–01, and 2001–02 is not available to us and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.
[2] OGC only came in to being in 2000.
[3] No records for 1997–98.
[4] Information included within IR figures for 1997 to October 1999 and HMCE from October 1999 to July 2003. 2003–04 costs are from July 2003 only.
[5] DMO costs are included in the service charge and disaggregated data for water and sewerage services are unavailable.
[6] NS&I occupy a MOTO agreement with HMRC and are invoiced quarterly for their utilities. Given the nature of how HMRC invoice them it is not possible to break down costs. The average spend per annum on utilities is £35,000.

Table 2: Electricity

£

	HMRC and VOA	HMT	OGC	ONS	GAD	DMO	NS&I	Royal Mint
1997–98	[1]—	221,000	[2]—	[3]—	[4]—	[3]—	[5]—	1,376,000
1998–99	[1]—	218,000	[2]—	695,000	[4]—	8,000	[5]—	1,403,000
1999–2000	[1]—	257,000	[2]—	672,000	[4]—	10,000	[5]—	1,658,000
2000–01	[1]—	161,000	165,000	533,000	[4]—	10,000	[5]—	1,363,000
2001–02	9,500,000	134,000	206,000	697,000	[4]—	11,000	[5]—	1,158,000
2002–03	11,889,000	288,000	190,000	536,000	[4]—	13,000	[5]—	950,000
2003–04	12,062,000	356,230	198,000	633,000	[4]25,000	48,000	[5]—	1,071,000
2004–05	10,446,729	342,231	150,000	755,000	83,000	39,000	[5]—	1,496,000

[1] The information for years 1997–98, 1998–99, 2000–01, and 2001–02 is not available to us and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.
[2] OGC only came in to being in 2000.
[3] No records for 1997–98.
[4] Information included within IR figures for 1997 to October 1999 and HMCE from October 1999 to June 2003. 2003–04 costs are from June 2003 only.
[5] NS&I occupy a MOTO agreement with HMRC and are invoiced quarterly for their utilities. Given the nature of how HMRC invoice them it is not possible to break down costs. The average spend per annum on utilities is £35,000.

Watermark Project

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the departmental sites included in the Watermark project. [15805]

John Healey: The organisations responsible to Treasury Ministers that took part in the Watermark project when it ran between April 2000 to March 2003 were:

HM Treasury
Inland Revenue
HM Customs and Excise
Office for National Statistics
Office of Government Commerce

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

A-levels

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of A-level examiners are drawn from the university sector. [15781]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is not collected.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to introduce an A star grade for the A level qualification. [15782]

Jacqui Smith: There are no plans to introduce an A star grade for the A level qualification. Our 14–19 White Paper sets out our proposals for increasing greater stretch and differentiation in A level, through the introduction of a new section in A level papers covering Advanced Extension Award type material, and the introduction of an Extended Project. We also support moves by UCAS and the Joint Council for Qualifications to provide Higher Education Institutions with students' A level unit grades.

Bullying

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations the Government have received from schools seeking its support in how to deal with bullying. [15513]

Jacqui Smith: Between June 2004 and June 2005 the Department received approximately 1,300 calls from those seeking support on bullying, of which an estimated 70 per cent. are from parents. Unfortunately, since parents and schools contact the Department on an ad hoc basis we are unable to provide more specific data. Those wanting assistance and guidance are also able to make contact electronically, using the Department's dedicated anti-bullying mailbox. Since March 2005, the mailbox has received 13 requests for support directly from schools.

The Department is also involved in funding several prominent organisations, who are actively involved in providing support for schools, parents, children and young people and promoting anti-bullying good practice. The Department therefore often recommends that inquiries are directed to these organisations themselves for a response. According to recent figures, the ChildLine partnership in schools (part-funded by the Department) was contacted by 425 primary schools, 482 secondary schools and 63 other education settings all requesting support with anti-bullying practice over the period. Furthermore, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (an independent umbrella organisation part-funded by the department) reports that 3,505 schools attended ABA training courses and conferences on anti-bullying, or requested an information pack between September 2004 and April 2005, whilst the ABA also gave direct support to 223 local authorities.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the number of cases of bullying in secondary schools in each London borough in each year since 2001. [16004]

Jacqui Smith: As data on bullying are not collected centrally we do not have statistics relating to the number of cases of bullying in each London borough. Bullying cases appear to be reported more often now than previously but we have no hard evidence that bullying is increasing or that it is affecting more children. Indeed, as children and young people increasingly feel safe at school to report bullying, and confident that it will be tackled effectively and sensitively, it is likely reporting will rise.

However, any level of bullying is too high and we are determined to help schools tackle the problem. Our guidance pack 'Bullying: Don't Suffer in Silence', the anti-bullying Charter and the anti-bullying website www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying offer detailed advice on preventing and addressing bullying. We also offer specific advice to schools on tackling homophobic bullying and are developing advice on racist bullying.

We have raised awareness of the importance of children who are being bullied telling an adult about what is happening, through our public information film 'Tell Someone' and our leaflets and postcards for children and their parents. Our recent 'Beat Bullying' blue wristband campaign was launched in partnership with Radio 1, during the first national anti-bullying week in November 2004. By the end of December, one million children and young people had answered our call to 'Make a Stand, Wear a Band' and make a visible commitment that they are not prepared to tolerate bullying and will stand by their friends.

Child Care Recruitment

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to encourage recruitment into the child care sector; and if she will make a statement. [15672]

Maria Eagle: Since 2000, we have been running a national child care recruitment campaign to encourage people to consider a career in child care. Our campaign, which has included television, radio and press advertising, is designed to complement activity at a local level where most recruitment into the sector takes place.

In April this year, we published our Children's Workforce Strategy, which identified the need to recruit more people into the children's workforce as one of the key strategic challenges across children's services. In the strategy, we proposed to continue supporting recruitment into the early years, including child care, sector, working closely with local authorities and other key partners such as Jobcentre Plus to facilitate effective local campaigns.

Class Sizes

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average class size in *(a)* primary, *(b)* middle and *(c)* upper schools in Bury St. Edmunds constituency has been in each year since 1997. [15121]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is shown in the table.

Maintained primary, secondary and middle schools: Average class size [1]—position as at January each year—Bury St. Edmunds parliamentary constituency

	Classes taught by one teacher			
	Primary schools	*of which: middle deemed primary*	*Secondary schools*	*of which: middle deemed secondary*
1997	25.4	0.0	20.6	22.7
1998	25.3	0.0	20.6	23.1
1999	25.6	0.0	20.6	23.1
2000	24.4	0.0	21.3	22.9
2001	24.1	0.0	21.5	25.2
2002	25.0	0.0	21.5	25.0
2003	24.4	0.0	21.2	24.2
2004	24.7	0.0	22.0	25.0
2005	25.2	0.0	21.7	24.2

[1] Classes as taught during a single selected period in each school on the day of the census in January.

Source:

Annual Schools' Census

Departmental Contracts

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment is made *(a)* of the environmental impact and *(b)* against sustainable development criteria of the bids made for contracts awarded by her Department; and if she will make a statement. [16127]

Maria Eagle: Guidance has been provided by the Departments' procurement advisers to contract managers to consider environmental impacts when awarding contracts. The Department operates a system of devolved procurement management. It is not possible to provide information on this question without incurring disproportionate cost.

Guidance has been provided by the Departments' procurement advisers to contract managers to consider environmental impacts against sustainable development criteria when considering bids made for contracts. The Department operates a system of devolved procurement management which does not facilitate the central collection of data.

Departmental Estate

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what have been identified as the most significant sustainable development impacts in relation to operation of her Department's estate. [16270]

Maria Eagle: The Department's key sustainable development impacts are:

Energy consumption;

Procurement;

Waste generation;

Water use; and

Business and commuting travel.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what parts of her Department's estate will not be covered by the commitments set out in the framework for sustainable development on the Government estate. [16271]

Maria Eagle: The following buildings on the Department's estate are not covered by the commitments set out in the framework for sustainable development on the Government estate:

Bolton St/Piccadilly; Sheffield Nursery; Blenheim Court, Peterborough;

Fountain Hall, Bradford; 1st Floor Wesley House, Luton; 2nd Floor Skyline

House, London; Manorgate House, Kingston upon Thames; Bayley House,

Bolton; Atlas House, Bolton; 200 Great Dover Street, London; Medway

Skillcentre Annexe, Sittingbourne; Middlesbrough Skillcentre Annexe; Ground

and 1st Floor Skyline House, London; Albion Wharf, York; Brandon Court,

Coventry; The Oaks, Redditch; Enterprise House, Wolverhampton; 12

Grosvenor, Crescent London; and Acorn House, Grimsby; Wales Bar and

Maltravers Road, Sheffield.

The above premises are either vacant, sub let to private occupiers, occupied by non departmental public bodies or occupied by fewer than 50 people.

The Department's HQ buildings in London, Sheffield, Darlington and Runcorn are covered by the framework commitments.

Departmental Stationery

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what percentage of paper for printed publications used by the Department in 2003–04 and 2004–05 was from recycled sources; how much post-consumer waste this paper contained; and if she will make a statement; [16043]

(2) what percentage of *(a)* copying paper and *(b)* paper for printed publications used by her Department in (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [16266]

Maria Eagle: In 2003–04, the Department used 17.38 per cent. (8.8 per cent. for direct comparison with 2004–05) recycled paper for copying containing 80 per cent. post-consumer waste. In 2004–05, the Department used 8.5 per cent. recycled paper for copying containing 75 per cent. post-consumer waste.

In 2003–04, the Department used 0.3 per cent. recycled paper for printed publications containing 75 per cent. post-consumer waste.

In 2004–05, the Department used 0.5 per cent. recycled paper for printed publications containing 60 per cent. post-consumer waste.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures she has put in place to ensure that her Department meets the targets set by DEFRA to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications brought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste; and by what date she expects to meet each target. [16267]

Maria Eagle: The following measures have been put into place for copying paper bought by the Department:

The Department is testing recycled copying paper on reprographic and photocopying equipment during 2005 and will be routinely used if evaluation is successful. The target for recycled copying paper for reprographic equipment is expected to be met by 31 December 2005;

Paper purchased for photocopying equipment has been successfully trialled and the target has been met;

Call-off contracts are in place for staff to order recycled copying paper for IT printing equipment. Procurement choice has been devolved to users. The target date has not yet been met. Procurement staff are drawing up a Sustainable Development Procurement Strategy by the target date of 1 December 2005 which will include the purchase of recycled copying paper.

The following measures have been put into place for paper for printed publications:

The Department has signed up to access the Department for Transports' Recycled Printing Papers (RPP) framework from 1 April 2005. External print suppliers will access recycled paper for all publications as routine unless the product has specialist requirements that cannot be met via a recycled source. This target has been met;

Management information on the use of recycled paper for publications is captured monthly from all external print suppliers and used to measure the Department's achievement of recycled paper targets;

Awareness is being raised within the Department through internal electronic communication updates and media and procurement websites.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports; and what (i) the name of each paper used and (ii) the (A) recycled and (B) post-consumer recycled content of each paper is. [16269]

Maria Eagle: My Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper and *(d)* paper for reports are Banner Business Supplies and The Paper Company. Main suppliers for *(c)* envelopes and *(b)* stationery are Banner Business Supplies and Alphagraphics.

Information for parts (i) and (II) is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Education (Bedfordshire)

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assistance her Department is *(a)* giving and *(b)* plans to give during the next 12 months to schools in Bedfordshire local education authority to combat disruptive behaviour in the classroom; and if she will make a statement. [16618]

Jacqui Smith: Our Secondary Strategy gives all secondary schools in Bedfordshire access to high-quality behaviour management training materials and support from three DfES-funded behaviour management consultants. Our Primary Strategy is giving all primary schools access to high-quality training and curriculum materials to improve children's social, emotional and behavioural skills. In addition:

our Excellence in Cities programme provides Bedfordshire with extra funding (just under £940,000 this year), about half of which can be used to fund Learning Mentors and Learning Support Units in schools in the Bedford Excellence Cluster; and

our Behaviour Improvement Programme provides Bedford with further additional funding (£780,000 this year) to support selected schools facing the greatest behaviour challenges.

The funding related to both these programmes will continue in 2006–07.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on special needs education provided in Bedfordshire. [16629]

Maria Eagle: Bedfordshire local education authority (LEA) has the same responsibilities to make appropriate special educational provision and keep its arrangements for special education under review as do all other LEAs. Bedfordshire's most recent Ofsted inspection in 2002 reported that:

The LEA's work in [special educational needs] is generally satisfactory and makes a significant contribution to school improvement. However, planning for SEN is weak and, in this respect, too little progress has been made since the last inspection.

The Minister of State for Schools and 14–19 Learning has recently written to Bedfordshire county council following complaints about its policy on writing statements of special educational needs.

Education Funding

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her estimate is of per capita funding for 16 to 18-year-olds *(a)* in colleges and *(b)* in schools over the next 10 years; and if she will make a statement. [15276]

Jacqui Smith: Available funding is determined through the spending review process and therefore we are not in a position to estimate what funding for 16 to 18-year-olds in colleges or in schools will be over the next 10 years. The Department allocates money, via an annual grant letter, to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) who then decide how best to allocate the money in order to meet the Government's priorities.

The Department's Grant Letter to the LSC in November 2004 set out a funding allocation of £9.3 billion in 2005–06, £9.6 billion in 2006–07 and £10.1 billion in 2007–08.

The LSC is currently finalising its forward plans and when that process is completed, we will understand what the outcomes of the spending review 2004 will mean for funding rates for both colleges and schools for 2006–07 and the subsequent spending review years.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the levels of funding for *(a)* primary, *(b)* secondary, *(c)* further and *(d)* higher education in Forest of Dean. [15814]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested on school and further education funding is collected at local authority level rather than on the basis of specific geographical areas. The Forest of Dean is part of Gloucestershire local education authority (LEA) and the table contains information on primary, secondary and further education for the financial year 2005–06. The Higher Education Funding Council for England provides funding directly to institutions, rather than to regions, and there are no higher education institutions in the Forest of Dean area.

Gloucestershire LEA	*Revenue funding 2005–06 (£ million)*
Pupils aged 3 to 10	[1]171.7
Pupils aged 11 to 19	[1]186.9
Further Education students (not including school sixth forms)	[2]43.3

[1] The figure includes revenue funding via Education Formula Spending (EPS), revenue grants allocated at an LEA level and Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funding for school sixth forms. Figures reflect relevant sub-blocks of EFS settlements and include the pensions transfer to EFS and the LSC.
Total funding also includes all revenue grants in DfES Departmental Expenditure Limits relevant to pupils aged 3 to 10 and 11 to 19 and exclude Education Maintenance Allowances and grants not allocated at LEA level.
Price Base: cash.
Rounding: total funding figures are rounded to the nearest £0.1 million.
Status: 2005–06 figures are provisional as some grants have not yet been finalised/audited.
[2] This figure is the revenue funding allocated to colleges and other learning providers in Gloucestershire for further education provision. The figure does not include other post-16 provision such as Adult and Community learning and Work Based learning for Young People.

Education Outside the Classroom

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she expects to publish the manifesto for Education Outside the Classroom. [14180]

Jacqui Smith: We aim to publish the manifesto in spring 2006. The Department will consult on a vision statement and common goals for the manifesto during the autumn term.

Educational Psychologists

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many educational psychologists she expects will qualify during the 2006–07 academic year. [15560]

Bill Rammell: The Department does not make estimates of the number of qualifications obtained in specific subjects.

Fire Safety (School Buildings)

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she plans to publish proposals for new guidance on fire safety in school buildings. [15328]

Jacqui Smith: Draft proposals for new fire safely guidance for schools are currently out for public consultation. These can be viewed on:

www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations

The consultation process began on 1 August and ends on 31 October. Subject to the extent and nature of comments that are received, we expect to be able to publish final guidance by April 2006.

Foster Carers

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the number of foster carers needed to provide placement choice for children; and if she will make a statement. [15015]

Maria Eagle: At 31 March 2004, there were an estimated 41,600 children in foster placements in England, representing 68 per cent. of all looked-after children. The Department itself does not currently hold information centrally about the number of foster carers. However, assisting local authorities to recruit and retain foster carers is a key priority for my Department, to ensure that placements which meet the needs of children and young people can be found without delay. A number of national initiatives are already in place or planned to encourage greater numbers of people to become and remain foster carers, including a Fostering Publicity Pack designed to help local authorities to run targeted local campaigns to recruit new foster carers for looked-after children.

In addition, work to identify and resolve difficulties in the collection of national data about foster carers is ongoing. Fieldwork involving a sample of local authorities is currently taking place in order to contribute to the development of an informative and workable data collection.

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of adequacy of funding for *(a)* allowances, *(b)* fees, *(c)* training and *(d)* management and support costs for foster carers; and if she will make a statement. [15016]

Maria Eagle: There has already been significant investment in funding for children's social services; total funding (including Formula Spending Share and Specific Grants) is £4.26 billion in 2005–06—up £300 million (or 8 per cent.) on 2004–05. In terms of future years, formula spending for children's social services is to rise by £500 million between 2005–06 and 2007–08 to a total of £4.5 billion. This funding provision is not ring-fenced, allowing authorities to plan to meet their own priorities—including for fostering services.

It is important to consider funding for fostering services alongside the investment made in related children's social services. Local authorities need to ensure that they have effective strategies in place for planning and delivering provision for all their children and young people who have additional needs, and that they make efficient use of available resources.

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will take steps to enable foster carers who make themselves available throughout the year to care for children to be paid fees for 52 weeks of the year. [15200]

Maria Eagle: We have no plans to standardise the payment of fees to foster carers. However, we are currently developing proposals for a national minimum allowance for foster carers, to cover the costs of caring for a looked after child, and shall be consulting fully on this issue. Research indicates that payment rates—including the payment of fees while placements are empty—are but one of a number of issues of concern to foster carers.

We are therefore taking forward work in parallel to develop good practice guidance for local authorities in order to address wider concerns about the transparency, consistency and efficiency of payment systems. Our intention is both to establish a national minimum allowance rate and to issue guidance in 2006.

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will allocate increased funds for foster care services. [15202]

Maria Eagle: Ring-fenced funding of £113 million has been made available from 2003–04 to 2005–06 through the Choice Protects programme to support local authorities in improving placement choice for their looked-after children—in particular through strengthening and expanding their fostering services.

Of this amount, a total of £7.25 million has been retained over the three years of the grant to fund national initiatives, including measures aimed at improving the status, support and training of foster carers. These include, in particular: a national advice line for foster carers, 'Fosterline'; work to improve the support given to foster carers who are subject to allegations; as well as work to improve training opportunities for foster carers.

In terms of future years, formula spending for children's social services is to rise by £500 million between 2005–06 and 2007–08 to a total of £4.5 billion. This funding provision is not ring-fenced, allowing authorities to plan to meet local priorities, and will enable further increased investment in fostering services.

Further Education

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils aged 16 to 18 have been educated in *(a)* further education colleges and *(b)* sixth forms in schools, in England since 2000, broken down by local authority. [13877]

Bill Rammell: Participation estimates of education by local authority are only available for those young people aged 16 and 17.

The number of these people participating in full-time education in further education colleges (including sixth form colleges) and school sixth forms (including independent schools) in each local authority are given in the table. The figures are given as at the end of the calendar year 2000 to 2003 (latest available).

This information is taken from the publication "Participation in Education and Training by 16 and 17 Year Olds in Each Local Area in England, 2002 and 2003".

Participation in full-time education of 16 and 17 year-olds by local authority in England, end 2000 onwards

Numbers

	School sixth forms (including independent)				*FE colleges (including sixth form colleges)*[1]			
	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*[2]2003*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*[2]2003*
North East	17,100	17,000	16,800	16,000	24,100	24,000	23,600	23,200
Hartlepool	300	300	300	300	1,300	1,200	1,200	1,300
Middlesbrough	400	300	300	300	2,300	2,200	2,300	2,300
Redcar and Cleveland	100	100	100	—	2,300	2,100	2,100	2,100
Stockton-on-Tees	800	800	800	700	2,600	2,600	2,600	2,600
Darlington	200	200	300	200	1,400	1,300	1,300	1,300
Durham	3,400	3,400	3,500	3,200	3,900	4,000	4,000	3,900
Northumberland	3,800	3,800	3,800	3,700	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,400
Gateshead	1,600	1,600	1,600	1,700	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,100
Newcastle upon Tyne	3,200	3,100	3,000	2,900	1,100	1,100	1,200	1,100
North Tyneside	1,700	1,700	1,700	1,500	1,500	1,400	1,400	1,400
South Tyneside	400	400	300	300	2,100	2,200	1,900	1,700
Sunderland	1,300	1,300	1,200	1,000	3,100	3,100	3,000	2,900
Northwest	41,200	41,000	40,500	39,800	74,800	73,900	70,900	68,800
Halton	400	400	500	500	2,000	1,800	1,500	1,400
Warrington	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	2,000	1,900	1,800	1,800
Cheshire	6,500	6,400	6,300	6,500	5,100	5,400	5,200	5,000
Cumbria	4,800	4,700	4,800	4,600	3,100	3,000	3,100	2,900
Bolton	2,000	2,000	1,800	1,800	2,600	2,700	2,700	2,800
Bury	600	600	600	500	2,800	2,800	2,700	2,500
Manchester	2,200	2,100	2,000	2,000	5,600	5,500	5,000	4,800
Oldham	900	900	900	1,200	3,000	3,000	2,900	2,600
Rochdale	900	900	1,000	800	2,500	2,400	2,200	2,200
Salford	200	200	200	100	2,800	2,800	2,600	2,400
Stockport	800	800	700	600	4,100	4,100	4,000	4,100
Tameside	300	300	300	300	3,200	3,100	3,100	2,900
Trafford	1,700	1,600	1,600	1,700	2,100	2,000	1,800	1,800
Wigan	500	600	600	500	4,100	4,100	3,900	3,800
Blackburn with Darwen	700	700	700	600	2,200	2,200	2,100	2,000
Blackpool	400	400	400	300	1,700	1,500	1,500	1,500
Lancashire	5,100	5,000	5,100	4,800	13,900	13,700	13,300	13,300

Participation in full-time education of 16 and 17 year-olds by local authority in England, end 2000 onwards

Numbers

	School sixth forms (including independent)				*FE colleges (including sixth form colleges)*[1]			
	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*[2]2003*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*[2]2003*
Knowsley	700	700	700	300	1,900	1,900	1,900	1,800
Liverpool	4,500	4,500	4,300	4,300	2,900	2,800	2,700	2,500
St. Helens	900	900	900	1,000	2,000	2,000	1,900	1,900
Sefton	2,300	2,400	2,300	2,600	3,000	2,900	2,900	2,900
Wirral	3,700	3,600	3,500	3,400	2,100	2,000	2,100	1,900
Yorkshire and the Number	36,600	36,100	35,500	34,700	44,000	43,200	42,200	40,400
East Riding of Yorkshire	3,000	2,900	2,900	2,900	2,500	2,400	2,200	2,200
Kingston Upon Hull, City of	700	700	700	500	3,400	3,100	3,000	2,700
North East Lincolnshire	500	500	500	400	2,300	2,300	2,200	2,100
North Lincolnshire	300	300	300	300	2,500	2,400	2,300	2,300
York	1,400	1,300	1,400	1,200	1,600	1,600	1,700	1,600
North Yorkshire	5,900	5,800	5,700	6,100	4,200	4,100	4,300	3,500
Barnsley	400	400	400	300	2,600	2,500	2,500	2,400
Doncaster	2,800	2,700	2,600	2,600	1,700	1,800	1,700	1,700
Rotherham	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,800	2,400	2,400	2,300	2,300
Sheffield	2,800	2,600	2,500	2,100	4,600	4,300	4,100	4,200
Bradford	5,900	5,800	5,900	5,200	2,700	2,800	2,600	2,600
Calderdale	2,100	2,100	2,000	2,000	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
Kirklees	1,600	1,700	1,800	1,700	4,600	4,600	4,600	4,500
Leeds	6,000	5,900	5,700	6,000	4,700	4,600	4,400	4,100
Wakefield	1,700	1,800	1,700	1,700	3,200	3,200	3,200	3,100
East Midlands	37,700	36,700	38,200	35,600	31,300	31,000	30,200	28,300
Derby	1,700	1,700	1,600	1,500	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,900
Derbyshire	6,000	5,900	5,900	5,700	5,400	5,300	5,100	4,400
Leicester	1,500	1,400	1,300	1,000	4,300	4,200	4,100	3,900
Rutland	700	700	700	600	400	400	400	400
Leicestershire	7,100	6,800	6,900	7,000	3,500	3,500	3,400	3,300
Lincolnshire	5,800	5,500	5,600	5,800	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,000
Northamptonshire	6,900	6,900	6,700	6,600	3,900	3,600	3,500	3,300
Nottingham	1,500	1,400	1,300	1,100	2,600	2,700	2,700	2,600
Nottinghamshire	6,400	6,300	6,200	6,200	5,100	5,000	4,800	4,500
West Midlands	41,700	40,700	40,100	39,100	49,400	48,700	47,300	46,600
Herefordshire	600	700	700	600	2,200	2,100	2,100	2,000
Worcestershire	5,600	5,300	5,300	5,300	4,600	4,500	4,400	4,300
Telford and Wrekin	700	700	600	800	2,000	2,000	1,900	1,900
Shropshire	1,900	2,000	2,000	2,000	3,200	3,000	2,900	3,000
Stoke-on-Trent	500	500	500	300	2,800	2,800	2,800	2,900
Staffordshire	7,900	7,700	7,600	7,500	5,800	5,600	5,800	5,600
Warwickshire	4,500	4,300	4,200	4,200	4,200	4,200	4,000	4,000
Birmingham	7,800	7,800	7,700	7,500	10,000	10,200	9,900	9,600
Coventry	3,300	3,200	3,100	3,000	1,900	2,000	1,900	1,900
Dudley	600	600	600	400	4,100	4,000	3,700	3,700
Sandwell	1,500	1,300	1,200	1,000	3,000	3,100	2,900	2,800
Solihull	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,300	2,400	2,500	2,400	2,300
Walsall	2,700	2,700	2,800	2,700	1,600	1,500	1,400	1,500
Wolverhampton	2,800	2,700	2,700	2,500	1,500	1,400	1,200	1,200
East of England	49,800	49,800	49,000	48,100	41,900	40,100	38,300	38,700
Luton	500	400	400	200	3,100	3,100	2,800	2,900
Bedfordshire	5,000	5,100	4,900	4,800	2,100	2,000	1,800	1,700
Peterborough	1,600	1,700	1,700	2,000	900	900	800	800
Cambridgeshire	4,100	4,200	4,100	3,700	5,600	5,300	5,300	5,200
Southend-on-Sea	1,300	1,300	1,200	1,400	1,200	1,200	1,100	1,200
Thurrock	100	100	100	—	2,000	1,900	1,900	1,800
Essex	10,000	10,000	10,000	9,100	11,300	10,900	10,400	10,800
Hertfordshire	14,500	14,200	13,700	14,400	5,400	5,300	5,300	5,600
Norfolk	5,600	5,700	5,800	5,500	6,100	5,800	5,400	5,500
Suffolk	7,000	7,000	7,100	6,900	4,100	3,800	3,600	3,300
Greater London	67,100	63,900	62,300	58,700	59,800	59,200	56,200	54,700
Inner London	19,800	19,000	18,600	17,100	24,100	23,900	22,500	21,800
Outer London	47,300	44,900	43,700	41,700	35,800	35,200	33,600	32,900
Barking and Dagenham	1,400	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,200	1,100	1,000	1,000
Barnet	4,100	3,900	3,800	4,100	1,900	1,900	1,900	1,800
Bexley	2,400	2,200	2,100	2,000	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,300

Participation in full-time education of 16 and 17 year-olds by local authority in England, end 2000 onwards

Numbers

	School sixth forms (including independent)				*FE colleges (including sixth form colleges)* [1]			
	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*[2]2003*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*[2]2003*
Brent	3,200	2,900	2,800	2,300	2,200	2,300	2,200	2,100
Bromley	4,000	3,900	3,800	4,100	1,100	1,200	1,100	1,000
Croydon	3,200	3,000	2,700	2,300	3,600	3,500	3,300	3,300
Ealing	3,400	3,300	3,200	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,200	2,300
Enfield	3,100	3,000	3,100	3,000	2,300	2,300	2,000	2,000
Greenwich	2,300	2,100	2,000	1,700	1,500	1,400	1,400	1,400
Harrow	2,200	2,100	2,000	800	2,800	2,800	2,800	2,700
Havering	1,100	1,000	1,000	1,000	2,700	2,700	2,600	2,600
Hillingdon	2,800	2,800	2,800	2,900	1,600	1,600	1,400	1,300
Hounslow	2,200	2,200	2,100	2,800	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,400
Kingston upon Thames	1,800	1,600	1,600	1,900	900	900	900	900
Merton	1,400	1,400	1,300	900	1,600	1,500	1,400	1,500
Redbridge	3,700	3,500	3,600	4,100	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,200
Richmond upon Thames	1,400	1,300	1,300	1,000	1,600	1,500	1,500	1,400
Sutton	2,200	2,100	2,000	2,600	1,000	1,000	900	1,000
Waltham Forest	1,300	1,300	1,300	800	3,000	2,900	2,700	2,600
South East	73,200	71,800	70,700	70,200	69,200	67,000	64,700	63,200
Bracknell Forest	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,300	800	700	700	700
Reading	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,400	700	600	800	700
Slough	1,200	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,000	1,100	900	800
West Berkshire	2,300	2,200	2,300	2,600	600	700	600	600
Windsor and Maidenhead	2,300	2,200	2,100	2,200	500	600	600	600
Wokingham	2,300	2,100	2,000	1,900	800	900	900	600
Milton Keynes	2,500	2,400	2,400	1,900	1,300	1,200	1,000	800
Buckinghamshire	6,700	6,700	6,400	6,600	2,000	2,100	2,200	2,000
Brighton and Hove	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,600	2,200	2,100	2,100	2,100
East Sussex	3,200	3,100	3,300	3,100	5,300	5,200	4,900	4,800
Portsmouth	400	500	500	500	2,700	2,500	2,300	2,200
Southampton	300	400	400	400	2,600	2,600	2,700	2,500
Hampshire	3,200	3,200	3,200	2,900	19,100	18,200	17,700	17,100
Isle of Wight	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,400	800	800	800	800
Kent	16,900	16,400	16,100	16,100	7,500	7,300	6,800	6,800
Medway	2,900	2,800	2,700	2,800	1,500	1,700	1,600	1,600
Oxfordshire	7,200	7,000	6,900	6,600	3,200	3,000	3,100	3,500
Surrey	10,500	10,500	10,200	10,200	9,100	8,500	8,500	8,200
West Sussex	5,500	5,400	5,300	5,500	7,300	7,100	6,600	6,700
South West	44,500	43,300	42,700	42,200	40,800	40,000	38,400	37,900
Bath and North East Somerset	2,100	2,100	2,200	2,500	1,100	1,000	900	900
Bristol, City of	3,100	3,200	3,000	2,600	3,200	3,000	3,000	2,700
North Somerset	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,600	1,500	1,500	1,600
South Gloucestershire	2,300	2,200	2,300	2,400	1,600	1,600	1,500	1,500
Cornwall	3,000	3,000	3,000	2,900	5,600	5,700	5,500	5,600
Plymouth	2,900	2,800	2,900	3,100	1,200	1,200	1,100	1,000
Torbay	1,300	1,200	1,200	1,300	700	700	700	700
Devon	5,900	5,700	5,500	4,900	5,900	5,700	5,600	5,700
Bournemouth	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,100	1,200	1,300	1,200	1,200
Poole	1,600	1,500	1,400	1,500	800	900	900	900
Dorset	4,800	4,500	4,500	4,200	2,300	2,400	2,200	2,100
Gloucestershire	6,400	6,200	5,900	6,000	3,700	3,600	3,400	3,400
Somerset	3,700	3,600	3,500	3,400	5,600	5,500	5,400	5,300
Swindon	400	300	400	400	2,800	2,500	2,400	2,200
Wiltshire	4,400	4,400	4,400	4,200	3,400	3,300	3,200	3,100
England	409,000	400,200	393,900	384,400	435,300	426,900	411,700	401,800

[1] Further education colleges will include a small number of 16 and 17 year-olds in HE institutions.
[2] Provisional

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to assist recruitment and retention in further education colleges. [15277]

Bill Rammell: The Government are committed to supporting FE colleges in their efforts to recruit and retain high calibre staff and currently fund two specific programmes of financial incentives to encourage teachers to work in colleges. A pilot programme offering bursaries to trainee teachers undertaking a full-time postgraduate certificate of education; a programme offering "Golden Hellos" to new college teachers in certain designated shortage subjects. In addition the keyworker living programme offers support to FE teachers in London and the South East in respect of housing costs.

These financial incentives are currently under review and the outcome of the review will be announced shortly.

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the effect of differential rates of pay between further education colleges' staff and school sixth form colleges on recruitment and retention in each over the last five years. [15278]

Bill Rammell: No such assessment has been made. Pay is a matter for individual colleges as autonomous employers.

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on her policy on further education colleges charging employers for training staff in NVQ level 1 and level 2. [15279]

Bill Rammell: The Government's Skills Strategy, reaffirmed in the White Paper published on the 22 March, sets clear priorities for public funding to support the drive to ensure that employers have the skills they need to be successful, and individuals have the skills they need to be employable and personally fulfilled. Finding a new balance of responsibilities between Government, employers and learners is crucial. My Department's policy is that employers should pay a contribution towards the tuition fee costs for all employees undertaking publicly supported training unless those learners are eligible for free provision eg if the learners are studying for a first full level 2 qualification or undertaking a literacy, numeracy or English language course.

Green Ministers

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what *(a)* work her Department's Green Minister has undertaken in the last three months and *(b)* meetings that Minister has attended in the last 12 months in an official capacity in that role; [16272]

(2) if she will list the meetings at which her Department has been represented regarding the delivery of sustainable development across Government as co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-committee of Green Ministers. [16273]

Maria Eagle: Following the general election in May, the Cabinet Sub-Committee of Green Ministers (ENV(G) was replaced by the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Sustainable Development in Government (EE(SD) whose members are departmental Sustainable Development Ministers. Although the Government publishes the title, membership and terms of reference of Cabinet Committees, it has been the practice of successive Governments not to disclose details of their proceedings.

I was appointed as our departmental Sustainable Development Minister in June 2005. Since then I have overseen the Government's response to the Environmental Audit Committee's report 'Learning the Sustainability Lesson' and the Department's work on a new sustainable development action plan.

Head Lice

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether she has allocated resources to schools to tackle the prevalence of head lice among pupils; and if she will make a statement. [15829]

Mr. Byrne: I have been asked to reply.

The Department of Health is responsible for funding the school health service, which among a number of health promotional activities, has a role in controlling the prevalence of head louse infestation among pupils. Parents are encouraged to check their children and other family members for head lice as need arises, and to arrange treatment with such additional advice and support from the local health care team—a school nurse, general practitioner, health visitor or local pharmacist—as is required. If this exercise is undertaken at the same time by all parents of children attending the school, then the spread of head lice can be controlled. Schools are resourced to maintain relations and facilitate discussion with families over a range of issues which, from time to time, impact upon school activities. These discussions may include, in consort with the school health service, the best approach to tackling head louse infestation.

Headteachers' Staffing Reviews

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the length of time needed for head teachers to complete their staffing structure reviews. [16013]

Jacqui Smith: All schools in England are under a statutory obligation to complete a review of their staffing structure by 31 December 2005. The time needed by head teachers will vary from school to school, depending on how far they have already progressed with implementing the remodelling agenda and the extent to which they wish to propose changes to their structures. We recognise that some schools may need support in order to complete an effective review by the deadline, which is why the Rewards and Incentives Group has put in place a comprehensive package of measures to supplement the published guidance.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assistance and advice is available to head teachers to complete their staffing structure reviews. [16014]

Jacqui Smith: The document, "Review of the School Staffing Structure: Guidance for Schools in England", which was produced and published by the Rewards and Incentives Group (RIG) in May 2005 (and is also available on Teachernet and Governornet websites), provides governing bodies and head teachers with comprehensive support in identifying the key steps necessary to conduct an effective review of the staffing structure.

For those schools that need additional, practical, and in some cases, face to face support in order to complete an effective review, they are able to request support and advice from the local authorities' link and human resources advisers and the four unions and associations that are part of RIG. Further support and guidance is also available from RIG in the form of a national RIG

helpline, a self-assessment tool for schools to use in identifying any further assistance needed, and a set of Frequently Asked Questions, which is available on partners' websites. This has been complemented by the hosting of six regional workshops by RIG partners for local authorities and head teachers, the focus of which has been the provision of practical support and sharing of best practice which can be shared widely across schools to assist the restructuring process.

Higher Education Initial Participation Rates

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills under what circumstances students whose domicile is *(a)* non-UK and *(b)* unknown are included in the Higher Education Initial Participation Rate; and how many students there were in each category in each year between 1999–2000 and 2003–04. [11101]

Bill Rammell *[pursuant to the reply, 12 July 2005, Official Report, c. 1016W]:* I am providing an amended response following receipt of further information from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). No students explicitly recorded as non-UK have been included in the HEIPR. Students with unknown domiciles at English institutions are assumed to be English and have been included in the HEIPR, unless the institution records that they are not eligible to pay home fees.

The first table records the number of students listed with unknown domiciles, who may be included in the HEIPR, depending upon their prior HE status. The second is provided for comparative purposes and gives the total number of initial entrants in the HEIPR (in thousands).

Entrants with unknown domiciles, who may be included in the HEIPR

Thousand

Academic year	*No prior HE*[1]	*Unknown prior HE*[2]
1999/2000	575	235
2000/01	1,380	145
2001/02	670	110
2002/03	980	170
2003/04	700	200

[1] Entrants with no prior HE are included in the HEIPR.

[2] Entrants with unknown prior HE status qualify in the HEIPR on a pro-rata basis, therefore only a proportion of these students will be included.

Notes:

1. Figures rounded to the nearest 5.
2. Information derived from Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record.

Entrants counted within the HEIPR

Academic year	*Number of initial entrants (Thousand)*
1999/2000	246
2000/01	249
2001/02	255
2002/03	268
2003/04	269

Source:

Information derived from Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record and Learning and Skills Council Individualised Learner Record.

House Building (Skilled Workers)

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what joint assessment her Department has made with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister of the number of additional skilled workers who will be required to deliver the house building targets in each of the sustainable communities growth areas. [15175]

Phil Hope: The precise number of additional skilled workers that will be needed to deliver the house building targets in each of the sustainable communities growth areas will depend very much on regional levels of productivity and the mix of skills required in each local area.

ConstructionSkills, the Sector Skills Council for construction, is already actively working at regional level to support the development of Regional Housing Strategies and have developed a skills 'observatory' to provide a more comprehensive forecast of skills demand and supply. Research by the Home Builders Federation (HBF), due to be published in September, is likely to indicate that skills and training needs will arise from these changes in the sector. ConstructionSkills will work with other stakeholders to develop an action plan based on the issues identified.

International Baccalaureate

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* state secondary schools and *(b)* city academies offer the International Baccalaureate. [15338]

Jacqui Smith: In January 2005 there were 34 maintained secondary schools, one academy and one city technology college with at least one pupil following an International Baccalaureate.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps the Government are taking to widen the availability of the International Baccalaureate in the state sector. [15705]

Jacqui Smith: The International Baccalaureate Diploma is a QCA accredited qualification and it is approved for use in the state sector if they wish to offer this. We have no plans to promote the use of the International Baccalaureate (IB) in the state sector.

In our recent 14–19 Education and Skills White Paper we explained that, as part of the proposed changes to A levels, we will pilot an extended project. We see this as a single piece of work, requiring planning, preparation, research and independent working. We expect it to become a universally available option to add stretch, breadth and interest for many sixth formers. In doing so, we will draw on the experience of qualifications such as the IB.

Key Stage 2 Spelling

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 18 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1399W, on Key Stage 2 spelling, if she will revise marking guidelines for Key Stage 2 English tests to ensure that spelling is taken into account in the longer and shorter writing tasks. [16439]

Jacqui Smith: No. In the Key Stage 2 English tests, spelling will continue to be assessed through a discrete spelling test.

Leadership Incentive Grant

Paul Rowen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her plans are for replacing the Leadership Incentive Grant when it finishes next year. [15291]

Jacqui Smith: Ministers have yet to take decisions on the targeting of additional funds through the new Single School Grant from 2006–07 onwards.

London Olympic Games

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps her Department is taking to use the hosting of the 2012 Olympic Games to encourage school children in London to take up sport; and if she will make a statement. [15571]

Beverley Hughes: Staging the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games in London will undoubtedly boost our national PE, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) strategy. We can use the games to inspire children and young people to take up sport and lay the foundations for lifelong participation. Together with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and other partners, we are exploring how we can further utilise the games to enhance the effectiveness of the PESSCL strategy.

The Government are investing—including lottery funding—over £1.5 billion, in the five years to 2008, to deliver the PESSCL strategy. An ambitious public service agreement target has been set to increase the percentage of 5 to 16-year-olds who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality physical education and school sport within and beyond the curriculum to 75 per cent. by 2006, and then 85 per cent. by 2008. We are on track to meet the target. Longer term—by 2010—our ambition is to offer children the chance to spend at least four hours a week on sport.

Looked-after Children

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the annual cost of looking after the children of adults who have themselves previously been in care in 2004–05. [15935]

Jacqui Smith: The Government have made no estimates of the costs in 2004–05 of looking after the children of adults who had themselves been previously looked-after.

Music Teaching

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average cost to those people who have to contribute to the study of a musical instrument at school is. [15996]

Jacqui Smith: This information is not part of the Department's statutory annual data collection. However, in February we undertook a survey of all local authority music services that included questions about the cost of instrumental tuition provided by music services. The survey findings will be available in November 2005.

NPQH Programme

Paul Rowen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many head teachers and senior teachers have completed the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) programme; how many middle leaders have completed Leading from the Middle; and how many applicants have failed to complete either NPQH or Leading from the Middle programmes in each of the last five years. [15290]

Jacqui Smith: On the basis of information provided by the National College for School Leadership:

The number of candidates who have completed the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) in the last five years is—2,258 in 2001; 3,183 in 2002; 3,295 in 2003; 3,838 in 2004; and 1,899 (to date) in 2005. Of those who hold NPQH—4,601 are headteachers and 8,657 assistant and deputy headteachers. While we can say how many candidates completed the NPQH in a given year, this will not necessarily be the same year they were appointed to a headteacher or assistant or deputy headteacher post. It is, therefore, only possible to say how many headteachers, and assistant and deputy headteachers currently hold NPQH.

The number of middle leaders who have completed the Leading from the Middle Programme since it was delivered for the first time in September 2003, is 1,978 in Cohort 1 which started in September 2003; 1,965 in Cohort 2 which started in April 2004; and 3,127 in Cohort 3 which started in September 2004. As the programme lasts for 10 months, no information is available so far for the numbers who have completed Cohort 4 which started in April 2004.

The number of applicants who have failed to complete NPQH in each of the last five years is—77 in 2001; 315 in 2002; 332 in 2003; 508 in 2004; and 328 in 2005.

The number of applicants who have failed to complete the Leading from the Middle programme is 175 from Cohort 1; 193 from Cohort 2; and 124 from Cohort 3.

Overcrowded Housing

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the impact on education of overcrowding in housing in England; and if she will make a statement. [15821]

Bill Rammell: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister published "The Impact of Overcrowding on Health and Education: A Review of the Evidence and Literature" in May 2004. The report (ISBN 1 85112 7110) was placed in the Library of the House.

DfES has not conducted an independent assessment of the issue. I am not aware of any significant evidence that subsequently adds to the assessment of the ODPM publication.

Part-time Students

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what research she has conducted on the financial situation of part-time students; [12484]

(2) what research she has conducted on the impact of new fees regulations in higher education institutions with an atypically high level of part-time students; [12485]

(3) what recent assessment she has made of the merits of fee deferrals for part-time students; [12486]

(4) what representations she has received from *(a)* higher education institutions and *(b)* the Office for Fair Access on the impact on student access of differences between the full-time and part-time student support regimes. [12487]

Bill Rammell *[pursuant to the reply, 18 July 2005, Official Report, c. 1406–07W]:* It should be noted that the publication date of the report, "Earning, Learning and Paying: The Results from a National Survey of the Costs and Financing of Part-time Students in Higher Education", referred to in my answer was December 2004, not November as previously stated.

A copy of the report is available in the House of Commons Library.

Positive Activities for Young People

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research she has published on the impact of the Positive Activities for Young People programme on youth crime and anti-social behaviour. [15978]

Beverley Hughes: An independent evaluation report covering the period April 2003 to March 2005 is currently being finalised. It is the Department's intention to publish on the internet on 28 October 2005. The website address is:

www.connexions.gov.uk

Prince's Trust Team Programme

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent funding changes have been made affecting the Prince's Trust Team Programme; and if she will make a statement. [15414]

Bill Rammell: The Prince's Trust Team Programme is funded by lead further education colleges through their allocations from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The Programme was developed with the help of funding provided by the LSC. In 2005/06 the LSC has emphasised its priorities for further education which guarantee a place in education or training for all young people and a focus on support for adults without a solid foundation of employability skills. As part of the normal annual cycle of planning provision, colleges decide on their continued support for local Team Programmes on the basis of their effectiveness in meeting the needs of young people, value for money, quality of provision and contribution to meeting the targets outlined in the college's development plan agreed with their local LSC. I met with the Trust's Chief Executive earlier in the summer and I am confident that through the LSC and local providers we will continue to support Team Programmes that meet the needs of vulnerable young people.

Private Finance Initiatives

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what steps she is taking to ensure that private finance initiative projects for which her Department is responsible create the minimum of environmental damage; [16128]

(2) what assessment her Department has made of *(a)* the sustainability and environmental impacts of private finance initiative (PFI) projects for which it is responsible and *(b)* the effectiveness of the PFI process as used by her Department to deliver environmentally sustainable projects; [16129]

(3) what plans she has to make those private finance initiative contracts for which her Department is responsible more accountable and transparent in terms of environmental sustainability. [16130]

Jacqui Smith: The Department for Education and Skills does not itself undertake private finance initiative (PFI) projects. PFI projects for the provision of schools are delivered through contracts between local authorities and private sector contractors.

However, my Department gives high priority to sustainability and environmental impact in all school building projects. We want all new school buildings to meet the highest environmental standards, whether procured through the private finance initiative or conventionally. To that end, we have worked with the building research establishment to develop a new specific environmental assessment methodology (BREEAM) for schools. This was launched in 2004. Further information on the schools BREEAM method is available at http// www.breeam.org/schools.html.

It is now a condition of capital funding from my Department that all major new build and refurbishment projects valued at £500,000 for primary schools and £2 million for secondary schools and involving rebuilding or complete refurbishment of more than 10 per cent. of the floor area of a school should be subject to this BREEAM assessment. This includes PFI projects. All these projects must aim to achieve a 'very good' assessment under the schools' BREEAM. This is a tough new requirement for schools that will ensure that environmental sustainability is considered in design and construction.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 9 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1076–77W, on private finance projects, what total value of assets and liabilities for each of the listed private finance initiatives and public private partnerships is recorded on the Government balance sheet; what proportion of assets and liabilities is listed; what the accounting treatment is for assets and liabilities; and whether it is compatible with *(a)* generally-accepted accounting practices and *(b)* international financial reporting standards. [15965]

Jacqui Smith: The Department for Education and Skills does not itself undertake private finance initiative (PFI) projects. PFI projects for the provision of schools are delivered through contracts between local authorities and private sector contractors. None of the assets or liabilities of these contracts is therefore recorded on the Government balance sheet (GBS).

The Department is itself undertaking one public private partnership (PPP) project in partnership with Capita, for the delivery of the Connexions card across England. There are no assets or liabilities in respect of this project recorded on the GBS.

Balance sheet treatment of PFI/PPP projects is determined by an independent auditor following United Kingdom generally accepted accounting practice, in accordance with Financial Reporting Standards issued by the independent Accounting Standards Board.

PSE Advisers

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many personal, social, health and citizenship education advisors there are in each London borough. [16330]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Pupil Funding (London)

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the per capita pupil funding in *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools was in each London borough, in the last year for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [15878]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is contained within the following table:

2005–06 Total funding per pupil aged 3–10 and 11–15 by London LEA

£

LEA name	Pupils aged 3–10	Pupils aged 11–15
Camden	5,710	6,820
Greenwich	5,200	6,460
Hackney	5,900	7,670
Hammersmith and Fulham	5,550	6,780
Islington	5,700	7,210
Kensington and Chelsea	5,700	7,200
Lambeth	5,700	7,600
Lewisham	5,340	6,950
Southwark	5,480	7,210
Tower Hamlets	6,130	7,360
Wandsworth	5,050	6,360
Westminster	5,450	6,460
Barking and Dagenham	4,320	5,290
Barnet	4,240	5,150
Bexley	3,760	4,640
Brent	4,830	6,050
Bromley	3,780	4,710
Croydon	4,080	5,220
Ealing	4,670	5,840
Enfield	4,280	5,190
Haringey	4,980	6,290
Harrow	4,220	5,140
Havering	3,730	4,710
Hillingdon	4,120	5,060
Hounslow	4,550	5,470
Kingston upon Thames	3,890	4,790
Merton	4,220	5,210
Newham	4,960	5,980
Redbridge	4,030	4,810
Richmond upon Thames	3,820	4,780
Sutton	3,850	4,710
Waltham Forest	4,540	5,680

Notes:

1. Total funding includes funding via education formula spending (EFS)/standard spending assessment and revenue grants allocated at an LEA level. It includes the pensions transfer to EFS and the Learning and Skills Council.
2. Total funding also includes all revenue grants in DfES departmental expenditure limits relevant to pupils aged 3–10 and 11–15 and exclude EMAs and grants not allocated at LEA level.
3. The pupil numbers used to convert £m figures to per pupil are those underlying the EFS settlement calculations.
4. Data as reported by the LEA and reported in cash terms rounded to the nearest £10.

School Buildings (Out of Term Use)

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of school buildings and sports fields was used during the school holidays in *(a)* England, *(b)* each region and *(c)* each local authority in 2004–05. [16040]

Beverley Hughes: The information requested is not held centrally. While it is Government policy to encourage schools to make their facilities available out of school hours, the extent to which they do so is a matter for each individual school.

School Meals

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils were eligible for free school meals in *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools in each London borough in the last period for which figures are available. [15879]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is shown in the table.

Maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools[1]: School meal arrangements[2]—January 2005—by each London local authority

		Maintained nursery and primary schools			Maintained secondary schools		
		Number on roll	Number known to be eligible for free school meals	Percentage known to be eligible for free school meals	Number on roll	Number known to be eligible for free school meals	Percentage known to be eligible for free school meals
	London	633,190	169,520	26.8	422,860	101,240	23.9
	Inner London	233,100	89,240	38.3	127,910	49,490	38.7
202	Camden	11,580	4,820	41.6	9,780	3,030	31.0
201	City of London	220	70	30.8	—	—	—
204	Hackney	18,140	7,380	40.7	7,220	2,790	38.6
205	Hammersmith and Fulham	10,070	4,490	44.6	7,050	2,310	32.7
309	Haringey	22,100	7,690	34.8	11,430	4,240	37.1
206	Islington	14,680	6,290	42.8	7,970	3,430	43.0
207	Kensington and Chelsea	7,320	2,960	40.5	3,510	990	28.3
208	Lambeth	20,270	7,680	37.9	7,910	3,030	38.3
209	Lewisham	22,140	6,160	27.8	11,720	3,240	27.6
316	Newham	31,520	11,190	35.5	18,070	7,560	41.9
210	Southward	23,610	8,610	36.5	10,240	4,740	46.3

Maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools[1]: School meal arrangements[2]—January 2005—by each London local authority

		Maintained nursery and primary schools			Maintained secondary schools		
		Number on roll	Number known to be eligible for free school meals	Percentage known to be eligible for free school meals	Number on roll	Number known to be eligible for free school meals	Percentage known to be eligible for free school meals
211	Tower Hamlets	22,700	12,260	54.0	14,090	8,730	61.5
212	Wandsworth	17,530	5,240	29.9	10,250	2,590	25.2
213	Westminster	11,230	4,410	39.3	8,560	2,810	32.8
	Outer London	400,090	80,280	20.1	294,960	51,750	17.5
301	Barking and Dagenham	18,490	4,740	25.6	12,290	3,300	26.9
302	Barnet	26,420	5,200	19.7	19,630	2,880	14.7
303	Bexley	20,780	2,570	12.4	18,290	1,640	8.9
304	Brent	23,000	6,780	29.5	16,150	3,560	22.0
305	Bromley	24,110	3,160	13.1	22,330	2,310	10.3
306	Croydon	30,290	6,640	21.9	18,750	3,570	19.0
307	Ealing	26,550	6,650	25.0	15,020	4,020	26.7
308	Enfield	27,140	6,790	25.0	22,060	4,710	21.4
203	Greenwich	21,170	7,480	35.3	15,170	4,770	31.4
310	Harrow	19,510	3,220	16.5	9,020	1,740	19.3
311	Havering	19,800	2,380	12.0	16,520	1,600	9.7
312	Hillingdon	24,260	4,360	18.0	17,420	3,010	17.3
313	Hounslow	18,860	4,250	22.5	16,600	3,250	19.6
314	Kingston upon Thames	11,720	860	7.3	9,590	800	8.3
315	Merton	14,780	2,040	13.8	8,540	1,380	16.1
317	Redbridge	23,890	4,130	17.3	20,310	3,050	15.0
318	Richmond upon Thames	12,760	1,240	9.7	7,290	1,190	16.4
319	Sutton	15,200	2,060	13.6	15,970	1,280	8.0
320	Waltham Forest	21,370	5,760	26.9	14,010	3,710	26.4

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Includes dually registered pupils and boarders.
Note:
Totals may not appear to equal the sum of the component parts because numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

School Repairs (London)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the requirement for school building repairs in each London borough; and what the costs are estimated to be in each case. [15670]

Jacqui Smith: Data on school buildings maintenance have been supplied to the Department twice; firstly in 2000–01 and secondly in 2003. The following table shows, for the two data collections, figures for each London borough. Costs have been updated to current costs. In addition to backlog repair work, the figures cover work needed over a five year period from the dates of the assessments, including cyclical and scheduled maintenance.

Central Government capital support for investment in schools has increased from under £700 million in 1996–97 to £5.5 billion this year and will rise further to £6.3 billion by 2007–08. Progress is being made year-by-year in improving the quality of the school building stock.

Schools maintenance requirements

	2001	2003
Barking and Dagenham	[1]—	62,441,458
Barnet	65,613,661	76,672,453
Bexley	41,501,485	46,147,620
Brent	51,240,631	43,944,403
Bromley	40,551,735	52,075,990
Camden	21,660,660	24,608,598
Croydon	27,576,388	29,752,920
Ealing	53,591,843	48,767,105
Enfield	71,824,888	53,015,502

Schools maintenance requirements

	2001	2003
Greenwich	53,508,581	70,350,093
Hackney	48,984,402	61,195,214
Hammersmith and Fulham	27,190,465	24,457,826
Haringey	[1]—	51,410,196
Harrow	26,640,453	31,784,504
Havering	69,694,380	63,341,119
Hillingdon	36,085,579	40,372,718
Hounslow	42,276,967	60,210,769
Islington	56,921,338	38,624,909
Kensington and Chelsea	11,395,334	10,127,270
Kingston upon Thames	31,468,000	43,320,352
Lambeth	[1]—	107,414,349
Lewisham	67,322,189	62,772,359
Merton	27,565,651	23,008,613
Newham	66,200,984	48,941,904
Redbridge	49,774,860	45,019,902
Richmond upon Thames	13,883,220	24,779,468
Southwark	38,462,069	51,926,358
Sutton	23,890,485	20,282,052
Tower Hamlets	44,530,317	27,322,041
Waltham Forest	38,597,729	26,742,607
Wandsworth	77,255,488	77,255,488
Westminster	39,387,252	29,212,585

[1] No data supplied, or data appraised as unreliable.

School Rules

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance is issued by her Department to head teachers on the development of school rules. [16448]

Jacqui Smith: Our Primary and Secondary National Strategies provide schools with comprehensive guidance and training materials on effective management of behaviour and attendance. These include practical

advice on how to develop, implement and review a school behaviour policy which covers principles, roles and responsibilities, rules, rewards and sanctions.

School Sports

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of schools hold annual sports day; and if she will make a statement. [16000]

Jacqui Smith: The 2003–04 PE, school sport and club links survey—the largest and most comprehensive survey of school sport in England—found that 96 percent. of the 6500 schools taking part in the survey held a sports day or festival of sport. The results of the survey were published on 29 April 2004, and copies of the report (The impact of school sport partnerships: The results of the 2003–04 PE, school sports and club links survey) have been placed in the Houses of Parliament Libraries.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of schools have no grassed play areas in *(a)* England, *(b)* each region and *(c)* each local education authority. [16001]

Bill Rammell: While the school premises data that the Department collects from local education authorities include information on the suitability of sports provision, the data do not show numbers or percentages of schools without grassed play areas.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of schools offer lessons in *(a)* tennis, *(b)* swimming, *(c)* cricket, *(d)* rugby, *(e)* football, *(f)* netball and *(g)* lacrosse in (i) England, (ii) each region and (iii) each local education authority. [16002]

Jacqui Smith: The data requested are not held centrally in the format requested and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

The results of the 2004–05 PE, school sport survey found that:

(a) 71 per cent. of the 11,498 schools taking part in the survey offer tennis;

(b) 83 per cent. offer swimming;

(c) 85 per cent. offer cricket;

(d) 82 per cent. offer rugby (this is a combined figure for rugby union—71 per cent. and league—11 per cent.);

(e) 97 per cent. offer football;

(f) 81 per cent. offer netball; and

(g) 4 per cent. offer lacrosse.

The results of the survey were published on 2 September 2005 and copies of the report (the results of the 2004–05 school sport survey) have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

School Transfers

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment her Department has made of whether there is a link between pupils who move school often and social and economic deprivation. [15053]

Jacqui Smith: The Department commissioned the Pupil Mobility in Schools project to produce a report on the nature and causes of pupil mobility in schools and the implications of high mobility for national strategies to raise achievement. This project identified strong associations between pupil mobility and social deprivation, family break up and moves into and out of temporary accommodation. Mobile pupils are more likely to be eligible for free school meals, have English as an additional language, have a special educational need or have behavioural problems.

Dobson/Henthorne/Lynas (2000): Pupil Mobility in Schools—Final report, London: University College London.

SEN

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils with special educational needs live more than three miles away from the *(a)* primary, *(b)* secondary and *(c)* special school that they attend; and if she will make a statement. [15999]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested has been provided in the following table.

The number and percentages of pupils with special educational needs who live more than three miles[1] away from the (a) primary, (b) secondary and (c) special school that they attend

	Primary schools		Secondary schools		Special schools		Total	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total pupils travelling more than 3 miles to the school they attend	158,907	100.0	604,240	100.0	47,051	100.0	810,292	100.0
Pupils with no Special Educational Needs	128,836	81.1	523,663	86.7	117	0.2	652,616	80.5
Pupils with Special Educational Needs at School Action	14,864	9.4	45,504	7.5	109	0.2	60,477	7.5
Pupils with Special Educational Needs at School Action Plus	7,955	5.0	19,675	3.3	786	1.7	28,416	3.5
Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs	7,252	4.6	15,398	2.5	46,039	97.9	68,689	8.5

[1] Distance is measured as a straight line between the pupils home postcode and the school postcode.

Note:

One secondary school from within Trafford Education Authority did not return a complete Plasc return in 2005. Therefore figures from this school have been discounted from the above table.

Source:

PLASC 2005 Final data

Sickness Absence

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many days were lost due to sickness among *(a)* teachers and *(b)* head teachers at (i) primary and (ii) secondary schools in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [16042]

Jacqui Smith: Sickness absence figures are collected at a national level only. It is not possible to separate school type or grade from this collection.

The numbers of days lost due to sickness absence for the last five years in England are shown in the table.

	Days lost	*Days lost per teacher*
2000	2,694,400	5.4
2001	2,782,100	5.4
2002	2,739,300	5.3
2003	2,853,600	5.4
2004	2,797,300	5.3

Source:
DfES Annual Survey of Teachers in Service and Teacher Vacancies (618G)

Special Needs (Milton Keynes)

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding has been allocated to special needs provision in Milton Keynes in each of the last five years. [15039]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is contained within the following table:

Budgeted net expenditure on the education of children with special educational needs

	£
2001–02	14,386,000
2002–03	17,972,000
2003–04	18,928,000
2004–05	21,131,000
2005–06	22,269,000

Notes:
1. Includes planned expenditure on the provision for pupils with statements and the provision for non-statemented pupils with SEN, support for inclusion, inter authority recoupment, fees for pupils at independent special schools and abroad, educational psychology service, LEA functions in relation to child protection, therapies and other health related services, parent partnership, guidance and information, the monitoring of SEN provision and inclusion administration, assessment and co-ordination. Also included is the funding delegated to primary and secondary schools identified as "notional SEN" and the individual schools budget for special schools. The figures recorded against "notional SEN" are only indicative of the amount that might by spent by schools on SEN and, from 2004–05 onwards, "notional SEN" delegated to nursery schools was reported on section 52 for the first time and this accounts for £10,975 and £16,944 of the 2004–05 and 2005–06 totals respectively. In 2005–06 Milton Keynes LEA also budgeted £1,662,081 for the transport of pupils with SEN but this is not included in the above totals as figures are not available prior to 2005–06.
2. The figures reported are the amount allocated for SEN by Milton Keynes, as recorded on their section 52 budget statement, and are shown in cash terms and rounded to the nearest thousand pounds.

St. John's Secure Unit, Tiffield

Mr. Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the closure of St. John's Secure Unit in Tiffield, Northamptonshire would necessitate repayment to the Treasury by Northamptonshire county council of the grant given by the Department of Health for its construction. [16684]

Maria Eagle: This issue has recently been raised with the Department for Education and Skills by Northamptonshire county council. Discussions are currently taking place between the Department and Her Majesty's Treasury, which are ongoing. The county council's request will be responded to as soon as discussions have been concluded.

Sustainable Development Strategy

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress has been made on her Department's sustainable development strategy. [16274]

Maria Eagle: We have completed or made progress with four fifths of the sustainable development action plan we launched in 2003. We are considering whether the remaining fifth are still appropriate to pursue. We are also working on producing a new action plan by the end of the year, in the same way that all Government departments have been requested to do in the UK sustainable development strategy.

Good progress has been made, for example, in school capital with the 'Building schools for the future' programme. It is making an important contribution to sustainable development in the public sector. We plan during 2005 to embed the use of the new schools building research establishments' assessment method (BREEAM) and to publish best practice guidance on sustainable school design.

The Department has also published 'Putting the World into World Class Education—An international strategy for education, skills and children's services' which lists sustainable development as one of the eight key concepts for instilling the global dimension into the learning experience of all children and makes a strong commitment to develop and offer educational support programmes to developing countries, especially Africa. The implementation plan for the strategy is currently being developed.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent steps have been taken by her Department to review its arrangements for public reporting of its sustainable development impacts. [16275]

Maria Eagle: The Department is currently reviewing and updating the information contained on its website in the light of the 2005 UK Strategy and the requirement to produce the revised departmental action plans by December 2005.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what arrangements her Department has in place to report publicly on its key sustainable development impacts. [16276]

Maria Eagle: DfES publicly reports on its key sustainable development impacts via its website and the annual Sustainable Development in Government report.

The DfES website is currently under review and will be back online shortly.

Teach First Scheme

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the drop out rate was among *(a)* newly qualified teachers and *(b)* teachers within the Teach First scheme in the last period for which figures are available. [15783]

Jacqui Smith: Provisional estimates show that in March 2004 9.3 per cent. of newly qualified teachers, who were in full or part-time regular maintained sector service in England in March 2003, were no longer in such service. This is the latest information available.

Information from the Training and Development Agency for the Teach First scheme shows that in 2004–05 of the 197 students who were recruited 176 attained qualified teacher status. This represents a drop-out rate of 10.7 per cent. It is not known what proportion of these teachers remain in teaching service.

Teacher Bursaries

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will offer trainee teachers in the post-16 sector bursaries commensurate with those available to prospective school teachers; and if she will make a statement. [16046]

Bill Rammell: The teacher training bursary initiative is a pilot programme which is currently under review as part of a wider review of recruitment and retention incentives for FE teachers. The results of the review will be announced shortly.

Timber Procurement

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether her Department's procurement policy includes timber used on and in the construction of departmental building projects; and if she will make a statement. [16277]

Maria Eagle: The Department has not engaged in any building or building refurbishment projects in 2004–05 or plans to start any building or building refurbishment projects in 2005–06. Therefore no timber will be procured by the Department or its suppliers.

Were the Department to require a refurbishment or building project, all timber used would comply with BREEAM guidelines in respect timber supplied from legal and sustainable resources.

Truancy

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many truancy sweeps have taken place within the Bedfordshire local education authority in each year since 1999; how many children were stopped in that period; how many children stopped did not have a valid reason for absence; how many hours of police time were spent on such sweeps; and if she will make a statement. [16541]

Jacqui Smith: Local authorities have the discretion to organise truancy sweeps as they see fit and we do not collect data on these locally arranged sweeps. However, the Department has invited authorities to take part in nationally co-ordinated sweeps each autumn and spring since 2002–03. Bedfordshire has taken part in each of these sweeps and provided the following data to the Department:

	Number		
	Truancy sweeps	*Children stopped*	*Children stopped without a valid reason*
Autumn 2002	[1]—	215	39
Spring and autumn 2003	28	178	62
Spring and autumn 2004	36	143	52
Spring 2005	20	105	41

[1] Data not collected.

We do not collect data on the length of time spent on the sweeps by either local authority staff or police officers.

The Government believe that truancy sweeps are an effective tool to raise the profile of school attendance in the community and help to stop those pupils who may be in the early stages of drifting into the habit of truancy. They also reinforce the message to pupils and their families that school and local authorities take the issue of attendance seriously. Since nationally co-ordinated sweeps began in 2002, some 92,000 pupils have been stopped: 37,000 (nearly 40 per cent.) of them were out of school without a valid reason and 42 per cent. (almost 16,000) of those without a valid reason were with an adult.

Unskilled Adults

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the number of economically inactive adults without a level 2 qualification; and if she will make a statement. [16039]

Bill Rammell: The Labour Force Survey estimates that in England, 49 per cent. of economically inactive adults are without a level 2 qualification. This equates to 2,917,000 people.

In 2005–06 we will develop the capacity of the further education sector to deliver an entitlement to free tuition to study for a first full level 2 qualification. From September 2006, this entitlement will be available across the whole country, providing those adults taking up training with a platform of skills for employability.

Under the new deal for skills we are trialling skills coaching and skills passports to help inactive adults develop the skills they need to return to the labour market and secure sustainable employment.

Video Conferencing Units

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many video conferencing

units are installed in *(a)* her Department and *(b)* each agency of her Department; what percentage of offices have these facilities in each case; and what plans there are increase the number of such units. [16265]

Beverley Hughes: Every DfES building has a number of video conferencing units installed within it as follows:

	Number
Darlington	7
London[1]	20
Runcorn	5
Sheffield	11

[1] 14 Sanctuary Buildings/6 Caxton House.

As the Department no longer has Agencies, no figures have been included in respect of that part of the question.

At the present time, there are no formal plans to increase the number of Video conferencing units in the Department but we constantly monitor the amount of use made of the studios to inform decisions about the potential need for extra facilities.

Vocational/Academic Education

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to extend existing vocational education schemes; what plans she has to implement new strategies to deliver the necessary skills to meet employers' demands; and if she will make a statement. [15502]

Phil Hope: The Government are committed to ensuring that employers have the right skills to support the success of their businesses and that individuals gain the skills they need to be employable and personally fulfilled.

Our 14–19 Education and Skills White Paper set out a radical reform agenda. There will be a full range of quality vocational opportunities from age 14 for young people of all abilities. We will introduce a new, high quality pathway of vocational learning from 14–19, leading to specialised diploma qualifications; we are piloting a work-focused programme for 14 to 16-year-olds with serious barriers to engagement; we will increase numbers of young people taking apprenticeships and increase the quality of the programme.

The two Skills White Papers set out our strategies for ensuring that skills training meets the needs of employers. The new National Employer Training Programme will provide packages of free training in the workplace, and subsidised training at higher levels, designed for employers and delivered to suit their operational needs. Employers will have increased opportunities to lead the design and delivery of training through the network of 25 Sector Skills Councils, to be completed next month, and 12 National Skills Academies by 2007/08.

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment the Department has made of the impact of *(a)* graduate apprenticeships, *(b)* vocational certificates of education and *(c)* vocational GCSEs on (i) the workforce, (ii) employers and (iii) the economy since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [15503]

Phil Hope: Graduate apprenticeships were announced in 1998 but subsequently replaced by foundation degrees in 2001, although some sectors still fund their own work based learning at higher education level. No formal evaluation of graduate apprenticeships was undertaken.

Vocational certificates of education (or vocational A-levels) replaced advanced GNVQs in 2000 but have now been redesigned for 2005 as general certificates of education in applied subjects. Just under 40,000 16–18 year-olds finished their VCE in 2003–04. Given how recently these were introduced the Department has not made the type of assessments requested.

GCSEs in vocational subjects were introduced for first teaching in 2002. A relatively small entry of 113,202 sat the first examinations in 2004 and many of the candidates will still be in further education. The Department has therefore not made the type of assessments referred to in respect of this qualification.

Voice Training

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what discussions she has had with the Teacher Training Agency on the role of voice training in the training of teachers; and if she will make a statement; [16311]

(2) what assessment she has made of the role of voice training in the training of teachers; and if she will make a statement. [16312]

Jacqui Smith: Teaching involves a variety of skills and trainee teachers learn how to create lessons where pupils want to learn and where teachers do not need to shout. To meet the rigorous standards for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), trainee teachers need to demonstrate that they can create such learning environments. Nonetheless, voice care is important for teachers at every stage of their careers. The training leading up to QTS is the very beginning of a teacher's learning about how to teach. Once a teacher has gained QTS they will pursue continuing professional development opportunities throughout their careers including, if their school agrees it is needed, voice care training.

Watermark Project

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether her Department has joined the Watermark project. [16268]

Bill Rammell: DfES was a member of the Watermark project from 2002. Although the project has now ended, our contract with their appointed consultant remains in place.

Departmental Websites

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the websites that come under her Department's responsibility; what the cost was of each in the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to each site in that year. [15898]

Bill Rammell: The websites that the Department is responsible for are listed below, along with the number of visits to each for 2004 (the last whole year that stats are available for):

www.dfes.gov.uk	10,859,230
www, teachernetgov.uk	4,308,205
www.connexions-direct.com	1,388,251
www.surestart.gov.uk	1,050,171
www.aimhigher.ac.uk	932,165
www.parentcentre.gov.uk	881,819
www.governornet.co.uk	662,607
www.wavtolearn.co.uk	417,376
www.need2know.co.uk	274,571
www.skillsforemplovers.gov.uk	119,324
Total number of visits	20,893,719

The hosting cost of these sites was £1,235,500.

The Department currently has large numbers of sub-sites falling under the main sites listed in the response and these are developed by policy teams using their own budgets. It would therefore be a difficult and time-consuming task to co-ordinate across all policy directorates and communications teams (for campaign sites) to assess overall costs.

The Department is working towards consolidation of these sites (which run into hundreds) into a small number of sites which specialise in delivering information and services to a particular audience, (e.g. for those working in schools). As well as this the new technical infrastructure, currently in procurement stage, will provide a centralised content management system (CMS) which means that more costs will be centralised, which will deliver better value for money.

Youth Services

Edward Miliband: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many youth clubs were available in *(a)* England, *(b)* South Yorkshire and *(c)* Doncaster North in each of the last 10 years. [15064]

Phil Hope: Youth clubs are delivered locally by local authority youth services and national and local voluntary youth organisations. Information is not held centrally on the number of youth clubs run by each individual local authority.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Audit Commission

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what proportion of invoices were paid on time by the Audit Commission in the most recent year for which figures are available; [15232]

(2) what percentage of the top 5 per cent. highest paid salaried employees within the Audit Commission are women; [15233]

(3) what percentage of the top five per cent. highest paid salaried employees within the Audit Commission are from black and minority ethnic communities; [15234]

(4) how many working days were lost due to sickness absence in the Audit Commission in the most recent year for which figures are available; [15235]

(5) what the percentage of disabled employees is in the Audit Commission; [15236]

(6) what percentage of the Audit Commission's buildings are accessible to disabled people. [15237]

Mr. Woolas: These are operational matters for the Audit Commission. I will ask the Chief Executive to write to the hon. Member.

Mr. David Anderson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many local authorities have been certified by the Audit Commission as applying the best value code of practice in local authority service contracts. [15391]

(2) if he will list cases of non-compliance with the best value code of practice on workforce matters in local authority service contracts that have been raised with the Audit Commission. [15393]

Mr. Woolas: This concerns an operational issue for the Audit Commission. I will ask them to write to my hon. Friend and make copies of the letter available in the House Library.

Mr. David Anderson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will publish the results of his Department's investigation into the monitoring of the best value code of practice in local authority service contracts. [15394]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, has commissioned a research team led by the Institute of Local Government Studies (INLOGOV) at the university of Birmingham to conduct a four year evaluation of the procurement agenda as it has developed since 1999.

The Evaluation of the Local Government Procurement Agenda—Baseline Survey Report (ODPM, August 2005), included information on incorporation of the code in contracts. The survey showed that:.

69 per cent. of authorities include workforce matters as standard in services contracts, 52 per cent. do so in works contracts and 36 per cent. in goods contracts;

37 per cent. of LAs (involved in a staff transfer) used client inspection to monitor workforce issues for transferred staff and 24 per cent. used annual supplier self-reporting;

14 per cent. of LAs involved in a transfer did not use any mechanism to monitor this issue.

Mr. Binley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects the Audit Commission to publish the final key lines of inquiry for the corporate assessment of councils under the comprehensive performance assessment process. [16685]

Mr. Woolas: This is an operational matter for the Audit Commission. I will ask the Chief Executive to write to the hon. Member and to ensure the answer is made available to the House.

Canvey Island (Gas Importation)

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will call in for public inquiry any planning application to reactivate Canvey Island liquid natural gas importation facility. [15621]

Yvette Cooper: The Government Office for the East of England is monitoring the proposal; any decision to call in the application for planning permission will take account of our published criteria.

Coalfield Housing

Dr. Tony Wright: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans there are to extend the national coalfield housing agenda to include former National Coal Board housing estates in areas of high housing demand. [15062]

Yvette Cooper: Regional Housing Boards are responsible for developing strategies for addressing housing issues in their Regions. Each of the Regional Housing Boards for which former National Coal Board estates are a significant issue set out their plans for dealing with such housing in their first strategies, published in 2003. In the West Midlands, the Regional Housing Board has initiated research to provide more information on all areas of high priority highlighted in its Strategy, including former National Coal Board housing. The research identified the eight former National Coal Board estates that are most urgently in need of intervention. This work will help to inform the revised Regional Housing Strategy, and future funding decisions.

Core Cities

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what definition his Department uses of the term core cities. [15244]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of The Deputy Prime Minister use the general term core cities to refer to all major regional cities in England. More specifically there are the core cities—the eight members of the English core cities group of local authorities—Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham and Sheffield. They began working together in the mid 1990s to raise the profile and prosperity of our major cities. From 2002–04, these formed part of a joint core cities working group with central government and the regional development agencies to explore ways of enhancing the potential of all core cities as drivers of regional and national economic competitiveness.

Correspondence

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his Department's policy is for dealing with and responding to correspondence received in *(a)* Welsh, *(b)* Scots Gaelic and *(c)* Irish Gaelic. [14705]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no formal requirement for its staff to be able to respond in any language other than English.

The Office has a contract in place for interpretation and translation services and should the need arise regularly this contract could be used to provide support to particular ODPM staff in their handling of correspondence.

Council Housing (Right to Buy)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average *(a)* house price value and *(b)* cost to the purchaser was after the discount of a right to buy council property in England in (i) 1997 and (ii) the latest available year for which figures are available. [15242]

Yvette Cooper: Average market value and average selling price figures for all council right to buy sales in England for 1997–98 and 2003–04 are tabled as follows:

£

	1997–98	*2003–04*
Market value[1]	42.9	68.2
Selling price	21.5	43.2

[1] Market value = selling price plus discount.

Source:
Quarterly returns on council house sales (P1B) from local authorities to the ODPM.

Council Tax

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average *(a)* band D council tax bill and *(b)* council tax per dwelling was in (i) England, (ii) Solihull and (iii) Birmingham in each year since the establishment of council tax. [15207]

Mr. Woolas: Details of the average band D council tax bill and average council tax per dwelling in *(a)* England, *(b)* Birmingham and *(c)* Solihull in each year since the establishment of council tax in 1993–94 are shown in the following table.

Average council taxes 1993–94 to 2005–06

£

	Band D, two adults for area			*Average per dwelling*		
	England	*Birmingham*	*Solihull*	*England*	*Birmingham*	*Solihull*
1993–94	568	657	520	456	455	471
1994–95	580	632	544	473	441	502
1995–96	609	673	595	498	485	549
1996–97	646	749	626	525	536	572
1997–98	688	794	661	564	570	607
1998–99	747	846	703	614	606	646
1999–2000	798	893	742	656	638	687
2000–01	847	938	786	697	670	726
2001–02	901	979	852	741	699	783
2002–03	976	1,026	910	804	739	837
2003–04	1,102	1,079	1,008	908	779	924
2004–05	1,167	1,106	1,045	967	787	957
2005–06	1,214	1,139	1,095	1,009	820	1,003

The amounts shown are headline taxes, before transitional reliefs and benefits and after capping and are taken from BR1, BR2, BR3 and CTB1 forms, as reported by the local authorities.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much revenue was raised from council tax in *(a)* England, *(b)* Wales and *(c)* Scotland in (i) 1997–98 and (ii) 2004–05; and what the projected level is for 2005–06. [15219]

Mr. Woolas: The revenue received from council tax in England in 1997–98 and 2004–05 was £9,570 million and £17,372 million respectively. These figures include both arrears received for previous years and prepayment of council tax for subsequent years.

The council tax requirement for England for 2005–06 is £18,354 million. This is net of council tax benefit grant and does not make any allowance for arrears received in 2005–06 for previous years or any prepayment of council tax for subsequent years. In practice not all of this amount will be received in 2005–06.

Data for revenue raised from council tax in Wales and Scotland are available from the Welsh Assembly Government and the Scottish Executive respectively.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the real terms percentage change in average band D council tax in England has been in each year since the introduction of council tax. [15222]

Mr. Woolas: The real terms percentage changes in average band D council tax in England in each year since the introduction of council tax are shown in the following table.

	Percentage real term increase
1994–95	-0.4
1995–96	1.6
1996–97	3.6
1997–98	4.0
1998–99	4.4
1999–2000	5.1
2000–01	3.0
2001–02	4.5
2002–03	6.7
2003–04	9.5
2004–05	3.3
2005–06	0.8

The figures are calculated from data reported by local authorities, are taken from BR1, BR2, BR3 and CTB1 forms and have been adjusted using the all items retail prices index (RPI) as at April each year.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment the Government have made of the effect of the council tax revaluation on average council tax bills in London. [15248]

Mr. Woolas: The terms of reference for Sir Michael Lyons' independent inquiry require him to make recommendations on how best to reform council tax, taking into account revaluation of domestic property. My right hon. Friends the Deputy Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer have agreed with Sir Michael that he will extend his work so that he can consider issues relating to the functions of local government and its future role, as well as, and prior to, making recommendations on local government funding. The Government have announced that they will legislate to postpone council tax revaluation to take account of the Lyons Inquiry's extended work which will inform the comprehensive spending review 2007.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment the Government have made of the effect of the council tax revaluation on the revenues to be raised from the additional levy to be charged on London council tax bills to fund the Olympics. [15249]

Mr. Woolas: The council tax is one element of a public funding package, which has been put in place to cover the cost of hosting the games. This package includes provision for up to £1.5 billion of lottery funding and up to £625 million from London council tax. A council tax revaluation would not affect the total revenues that may need to be raised for the Olympics from council taxpayers in London.

Departmental Estate

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total floor space is of buildings *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by (i) his Department and (ii) its agencies. [15953]

Mr. Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total floor space area is of buildings *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by (i) his Department and (ii) its agencies. [16280]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The total floor space of buildings owned and leased by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and its agencies as at September 2005 is as follows:

Sq m

	Owned	*Leased*
ODPM	11,756	82,076
Agencies	38,349	13,160

Of the figures given for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, one of the freehold buildings is Burlington House which is leased to the Royal Academy and five Learned Societies. The data include the space that other Government Departments occupy in buildings owned or leased by ODPM but do not include space that the office occupies in other Government Departments' buildings.

These figures do not include buildings occupied by Government offices which perform functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

Departmental Publications

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many publications his Department has produced in each year since 1997. [15572]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created on 29 May 2002.

In the year 2002–03 we produced 422 new publications, in the year 2003–04 455 new publications and in 2004–05 521 new publications.

Websites

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what websites come under his Department's responsibility. [16005]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The answer is as follows:

www.odpm.gov.uk
www.neighbourhood.gov.uk
www.socialexclusion.gov.uk
www.bvpi.gov.uk (Best value performance indicators)
www.publications.odpm.gov.uk
www.spkweb.org.uk (Supporting people programme)
http://www.gos.gov.uk/national (Government office for the regions)
www.fti.neighbourhood.gov.uk (Floor Targets Interactive)
www.localegov.gov.uk
www.rmd.odpm.gov.uk (Research programmes)
www.info4local.gov.uk
www.firekills.gov.uk (Fire safery campaigns)
www.renewal.net
www.firesafetytoolbox.org.uk
www.cleanersafergreener.gov.uk
www.iggi.gov.uk (Intra governmental geographic information)
www.frstoolkit.odpm.gov.uk (Fire and rescue service recruitment)
www.futureleadership.gov.uk
www.spdirectory.org.uk (Supporting people directory of services)
www.nlud.org.uk (National land use directory)
www.planningportal.gov.uk
www.procurementportal.odpm.gov.uk
www.firelink.org.uk
www.firecontrol.odpm.gov.uk
www.local.odpm.gov.uk (Local government finance)
www.xoq83.dial.pipex.com (Local government pension scheme)
www.bmespark.org.uk (Black minority ethnic supporting people)

Disabled Access

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of his Department's buildings are accessible to disabled people. [15231]

Jim Fitzpatrick: 88 per cent. of the buildings occupied by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are accessible for disabled people. This represents 15 out of 17 buildings.

The two buildings, both of which are inaccessible to people with ambulatory difficulties, are a small office in Glossop, which is situated on the first floor above a high street bank, and a small office facility adjacent to the main storage hangers at Marchington. The former is nearing the end of its lease.

This answer does not include the buildings occupied by Government Offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

Disabled Employees

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the percentage of disabled employees in his Department is. [15230]

Jim Fitzpatrick: ODPM have recently carried out a diversity survey of its staff. The results of this survey show that 5 per cent. of staff, who responded to our Race Equality Survey, declared themselves as being disabled.

Empty Properties (Suffolk)

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many empty properties there have been in each local authority area in Suffolk for each of the last four years. [15131]

Yvette Cooper: The available information on empty homes in each local authority area in Suffolk is given in the following table. This comes from a combination of data supplied by local authorities on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's (ODPM's) housing strategy statistical appendix return and the housing corporation's regulatory and statistical return.

Total vacant dwellings at 1 April by local authority area in Suffolk, 2001–04

Local Authority name	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Babergh	658	534	1,018	963
Forest Heath	603	603	455	393
Ipswich	1,827	1,754	1,584	1,752
Mid Suffolk	1,475	1,470	1,464	1,622
St. Edmundsbury	1,057	1,016	1,019	610
Suffolk Coastal	2,343	2,060	1,859	1,495
Waveney	1,401	2,265	3,450	1,520
Suffolk	9,364	9,702	10,849	8,355

Sources:
ODPM's annual housing strategy statistical appendix (HSSA) returns and the housing corporation's annual regulatory and statistical return (RSR).

Energy Efficiency

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what targets he has set for improving energy efficiency; and how he intends to achieve these targets. [16161]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has adopted the energy targets as set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. These include to reduce energy consumption by 15 per cent. by 2010–11 over the 1999–2000 baseline (as measured by fuel/electricity used per m^2.)

Projects are under way to increase energy efficiency and achieve the targets. These include working in partnership with The Carbon Trust, who are undertaking energy audits in the Office's HQ buildings. The results of these audits have been included in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Energy Efficiency Action Plan, which outlines short, medium and long-terms projects to be implemented in order to achieve the required energy targets. These actions were agreed with the ODPM Management Board earlier this year.

These actions are included within the certificated and independently audited ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems which the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has developed to manage our response to the "Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate".

Equality and Diversity

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much the Department has spent promoting equality and diversity in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [14668]

Jim Fitzpatrick: ODPM is fully committed to promoting equality and diversity within all policy areas in support of the Government's commitment to a diverse and integrated society. It has a number of policies and processes in place to ensure that there is no unfair discrimination on any grounds. Equality and diversity lie at the heart of creating sustainable communities and the Office seeks to embed these principles into all of its activities.

It should be noted that ODPM was created in May 2002 therefore data are not available before this date. The figures supplied are for staff and project costs identified within ODPM's equality and diversity unit (EDU) and equality and diversity-related costs within the Department's neighbourhood renewal unit (NRU).

	Total
2002–03	462,000
2003–04	921,000
2004–5	951,000
2005–06 (forecast)	1,105,000

European Contractors

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the contractors based in other EU member states that are providing services to his office. [15443]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The following contractor based in other EU member states provides services:

Kuiken Hytrans BV

Extended Home Ownership Programme

Susan Kramer: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people he estimates will be eligible for his Department's extended home ownership programme in each London borough; and if he will make a statement. [15862]

Yvette Cooper: Our new Homebuy scheme will commence in April 2006. The New Build and Open Market options will contribute towards helping around 100,000 households into home ownership by 2010. The scheme will be available to social tenants, those on them housing register, key public sector workers and other first time buyers prioritised for assistance in their region by Regional Housing Boards.

It is not possible to estimate at the moment the number of people in each region who will be eligible. In London, and other regions, eligibility will depend on the priorities for investment established with the Regional Housing Board and decisions taken on the Housing Corporation's National Affordable Housing Programme 2006–08 which will be announced early in 2006.

In addition, Social Homebuy will provide new opportunities for social tenants to buy a share of their home at a discount. Social landlords are being encouraged to participate, but as it is a voluntary scheme it will be up to individual landlords to decide whether to operate the scheme in any given area.

Fire Deaths

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many fire-related deaths there have been in dwellings in each London *(a)* constituency and *(b)* borough in each year since 2000. [15358]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The number of fire related deaths (accidental and deliberate) in dwellings in each London constituency recorded by the London Fire Brigade for the years between 2000 and 2004 is as follows:

Fire deaths—London constituency

Constituency	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*Total*
Barking	—	—	3	2	—	5
Battersea	—	1	—	1	2	4
Beckenham	4	—	—	—	1	5
Bethnal Green and Bow	2	3	1	—	—	6
Bexleyheath and Crayford	1	—	—	1	1	3
Brent East	—	4	1	—	—	5
Brent North	—	2	—	—	1	3
Brent South	—	1	1	2	1	5
Brentford and Isleworth	—	2	1	2	1	6
Bromley and Chislehurst	1	—	1	—	1	3
Camberwell and Peckham	—	—	—	1	—	1
Carshalton and Wallington	—	1	—	2	2	5
Chingford and Woodford Green	1	1	1	—	—	3
Chipping Barnet	—	1	—	1	1	3
Cities of London and Westminster	—	2	2	—	—	4
Croydon Central	—	1	1	—	2	4
Croydon North	1	3	—	—	—	4
Croydon South	—	—	1	—	2	3
Dulwich and West Norwood	1	1	—	—	—	2
Ealing North	—	1	5	2	—	8
Ealing, Acton and Shepherd's Bush	1	—	1	1	—	3
Ealing, Southall	1	2	2	4	—	9

Fire deaths—London constituency

Constituency	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
East Ham	3	2	—	4	—	9
Edmonton	—	—	—	1	—	1
Eltham	—	1	—	—	1	2
Enfield North	—	—	1	—	—	1
Enfield, Southgate	2	2	—	—	2	6
Erith and Thamesmead	1	—	1	1	—	3
Feltham and Heston	—	2	—	1	—	3
Finchley and Golders Green	1	1	1	1	—	4
Greenwich and Woolwich	1	1	2	—	—	4
Hackney North and Stoke Newington	1	—	1	4	—	6
Hackney South and Shoreditch	4	2	2	—	1	9
Hammersmith and Fulham	—	1	2	2	2	7
Hampstead and Highgate	—	1	2	2	1	6
Harrow East	—	—	1	1	—	2
Harrow West	3	2	—	2	—	7
Hayes and Harlington	—	1	—	—	1	2
Hendon	1	1	—	1	—	3
Holborn and St. Pancras	2	—	2	2	—	6
Hornchurch	—	1	—	1	—	2
Hornsey and Wood Green	—	2	1	1	1	5
Ilford North	1	—	—	1	—	2
Ilford South	1	—	—	3	—	4
Islington North	1	1	1	2	1	6
Islington South and Finsbury	—	3	—	1	—	4
Kensington and Chelsea	1	—	2	1	1	5
Kingston and Surbiton	—	1	1	—	1	3
Lewisham East	—	1	—	1	1	3
Lewisham West	—	—		1	1	2
Lewisham, Deptford	—	7	2	1	2	12
Leyton and Wanstead	1	—	1	2	—	4
Mitcham and Morden	—	1	—	1	—	2
North Southwark and Bermondsey	1	—	2	1	—	4
Old Bexley and Sidcup	2	1	1	3	—	7
Orpington	—	—	—	—	3	3
Poplar and Canning Town	1	—	1	2	—	4
Putney	1	—	—	—	—	1
Regent's Park and Kensington North	—	—	2	—	1	3
Richmond Park	2	—	1	—	1	4
Romford	—	—	—	—	1	1
Ruislip-Northwood	—	—	1	1	—	2
Streatham	—	1	—	1	—	2
Sutton and Cheam	2	—	1	—	—	3
Tooting	1	—	2	—	—	3
Tottenham	—	1	1	1	—	3
Twickenham	1	—	1	1	—	3
Upminster	—	1	2	1	—	4
Uxbridge	—	—	—	—	1	1
Vauxhall	—	1	—	2	1	4
Walthamstow	2	—	1	2	2	7
West Ham	—	1	1	—	3	5
Wimbledon	—	1	—	2	1	4
Grand total	50	67	61	74	45	297

Source:

London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority

The number of fire related deaths (accidental and deliberate) in dwellings in each London borough recorded by the London Fire Brigade for the years between 2000 and 2004 is as follows.

Fire deaths—London borough

Borough name	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*Total*
Barking and Dagenham	—	—	3	2	—	5
Barnet	2	3	1	3	1	10
Bexley	3	1	2	4	1	11
Brent	—	7	2	2	2	13
Bromley	5	—	1	—	5	11
Camden	2	1	4	4	1	12
City of London	—	1	—	—	—	1
Croydon	1	4	2	—	3	10
Ealing	1	3	7	7	—	18
Enfield	2	2	1	1	2	8
Greenwich	2	2	2	1	1	8
Hackney	5	2	3	4	1	15
Hammersmith and Fulham	1	1	3	2	2	9
Haringey	—	3	2	2	1	8
Harrow	3	2	1	3	—	9
Havering	—	2	2	2	1	7
Hillingdon	—	1	1	1	2	5
Hounslow	—	4	1	3	1	9
Islington	1	4	1	3	1	10
Kensington and Chelsea	1	—	3	1	1	6
Kingston	2	1	1	—	2	6
Lambeth	1	3	—	3	1	8
Lewisham	—	8	2	3	4	17
Merton	2	—	3	1	6	—
Newham	3	3	1	4	3	14
Redbridge	3	—	1	5	—	9
Richmond	1	—	2	1	—	4
Southwark	1	—	2	2	—	5
Sutton	2	1	1	2	3	9
Tower Hamlets	3	3	2	2	—	10
Waltham Forest	3	1	2	3	2	11
Wandsworth	2	1	2	1	2	8
Westminster	—	1	3	—	1	5
Total	50	67	61	74	45	297

Source:
London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority

Susan Kramer: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many fire-related deaths have occurred in dwellings in *(a)* Richmond-upon-Thames borough and the *(b)* the Royal borough of Kingston-upon-Thames since 2000. [15844]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The fire related deaths (accidental and deliberate) in dwellings in Richmond-upon-Thames and Kingston-upon-Thames for the calendar years since 2000 are as follows:

Fire deaths

	Kingston-upon-Thames	*Richmond-upon-Thames*
2000	2	1
2001	1	0
2002	1	2
2003	0	1
2004	2	0
Total	6	4

Source:
London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority

The Kingston figures include one fatality in 2004 where there was no fire brigade attendance, but where the coroner has ruled that the death was fire related.

Fire Service

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the fire and rescue services building control performance handbook will next be updated; and what key performance indicators he plans to include. [15325]

Jim Fitzpatrick: We are carrying out a consultation of a revision of the "Building Regulations and Fire Safety Procedural Guidance", a document which sets out protocols for the communication of fire safety information and views between building control bodies, fire and rescue services and applicants for building regulatory approval.

The revision is necessary to reflect the proposed changes to fire safety law that will be brought about by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. We will review the responses to that consultation when the consultation closes in mid-November and expect to finish the revised document in the spring of next year.

We have also developed, in parallel, in consultation with stakeholders including the chief fire officers' association (CFOA), key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the overall performance of building control bodies. We have liaised with CFOA about the inclusion of a specific KPI on building control bodies' consultation of fire and rescue services in order to

measure the perceptions of the fire and rescue services of the value provided by consultation with building control bodies.

It is hoped that the KPIs can be launched on the ODPM website later this year, and included on the Audit Commission's library of local performance indicators website.

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what measures are in place to ensure advice from consultants on fire risk assessments under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 is *(a)* competent, *(b)* impartial and *(c)* professional. [15326]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 does not impose specific requirements about the competence, impartiality or professionalism of consultants employed to undertake a fire risk assessment on behalf of a responsible person.

However, where a person has obligations under a contract covering the safety of premises then that contractor is treated much in the same way as a responsible person to the extent that their safety obligations extend. The full enforcement powers together with the legal penalties associated with them can be brought to bear on such a contractor.

The responsible person remains responsible for ensuring that a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks has been undertaken and if he fails to do this then the enforcement powers and penalties can be brought to bear upon that person.

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to use third party accreditation schemes for fire protection contracts under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005; and if he will make a statement. [15327]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no such plans. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order requires the responsible person to appoint one or more competent persons to implement and maintain necessary preventative and protection measures. Third party accreditation schemes are one means that a contractor may use to show they have the appropriate training and experience or knowledge and other qualities to enable them properly to assist in undertaking these measures.

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to update guidance to fire and rescue services on the operation of electrical equipment on the fire ground. [15330]

Jim Fitzpatrick: There are no plans to issue revised guidance to fire and rescue services on the operation of electrical equipment.

Susan Kramer: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people have been employed in the fire services in England since 2000, broken down by *(a)* ethnicity and *(b)* gender; and if he will make a statement. [15852]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The number of successful applicants for employment in fire and rescue services in England in each year since 2000, broken down by ethnicity and gender, is set out in the tables.

Gender and ethnicity of successful applicants to the Fire and Rescue Service

	2000–01
Gender	
Male	3,017
Female	853
Total	3,870
Ethnicity	
White	3,728
Black Caribbean	38
Black African	12
Black other	25
Indian	11
Pakistani	6
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	3
Other Asian	4
Other	33
Total[1,2,3]	3,862

[1] Nottingham had 4 male successful applicants whose ethnicity was not stated.
[2] Hereford and Worcester two male and one female successful applicants whose ethnicity was not stated.
[3] Cambridgeshire had 1 successful applicant whose ethnicity was not stated.
Source:
ODPM Annual returns.

Gender and ethnicity of successful applicants to the Fire and Rescue Service

	2001–02[1]	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Gender			
Male	3,004	2,992	3,007
Female	970	970	1,270
Total	3,974	3,962	4,277
Ethnicity			
White[2]			
British	3,172	3,615	3,733
Irish	6	9	20
Other white	114	23	67
Mixed			
White and black Caribbean	4	8	18
White and black African	1	1	3
White and Asian	4	6	7
Other mixed	3	11	13
Asian or Asian British			
Indian	14	22	40
Pakistani	7	8	12
Bangladeshi	0	0	3
Other Asian	5	10	10
Black or black British			
Caribbean	29	46	44
African	7	22	51
Other black	12	9	7
Chinese or other not stated			
Chinese	6	9	4
Other	12	11	49
Total	3,484	3,962	4,277

[1] Ethnicity figures for 2001–02 exclude London who had not adopted the 16+1 breakdown for that year.
In 2001–02, London had 451 successful applicants (373 white, 72 minority ethnic, six not stated).
[2] Northamptonshire was unable to provide a detailed breakdown of the 'white' category. In 2001–02, Northamptonshire had 39 successful applicants who were classified as 'white'.
Source:
ODPM Annual returns.

In the period 31 March 2000 to 31 March 2004, the number of women employed by Fire and Rescue Services in England increased by 1,338. In the same period, the number of personnel who classified themselves as belonging to one of the minority ethnic groups increased by 468.

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the cost of the proposed regionalisation of fire control. [16166]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Over a 15 year period (2004–05 to 2018–19) running the control service and implementing the FiReControl project is expected to cost £988 million. Over the first six years, the Government will spend an additional £74 million over and above Fire and Rescue Authority's forecasts for replacing existing controls, as part of its substantial investment in the modernisation of the fire and rescue service. After all nine controls are operating it is expected that there will be annual savings of over £20 million (30 per cent. reduction in annual running costs), recouping the initial investment and freeing up additional resources, which will be available for spending on other local initiatives such as community fire safety. Over the same 15 year period, leaving the control service in the existing 46 controls would cost £1,090 million and would not provide a fully resilient service.

Mike Penning: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on his plans for reform of fire services in the *(a)* Hemel Hempstead constituency and *(b)* South West Hertfordshire constituency. [16714]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Fire and rescue authorities are required by the fire and rescue service national framework to have in place and maintain an integrated risk management plan (ERMP) which reflects local need and sets out plans to tackle effectively both existing and potential risks to communities. It is, therefore, for Hertfordshire county council fire authority to determine appropriate fire cover in its area including the constituencies of Hemel Hempstead and South West Herts.

Susan Kramer: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many deliberate fires have been recorded in *(a)* Richmond-upon-Thames borough and *(b)* the Royal borough of Kingston-upon-Thames since 2000. [15843]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The number of deliberate primary and secondary fires recorded by the London Fire Brigade for Richmond and Kingston boroughs since 2000 is as follows:

	Kingston	*Richmond*
1999–2000	563	581
2000–01	548	505
2001–02	609	533
2002–03	522	523
2003–04	706	750
2004–05	568	462
Total	3,516	3,354

Source:
London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority

Freedom of Information

Pete Wishart: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many Freedom of Information Act 2000 requests have been answered by the Department; and in how many cases information was *(a)* wholly exempted, *(b)* partly exempted and *(c)* the requests were answered in full. [14959]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my right hon. and learned Friend the Minister of State for the Department for Constitutional Affairs to the hon. Member on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2248W.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many requests his Department has received to date for information under the environmental information regulations. [15246]

Jim Fitzpatrick: In the six months to 30 June 2005, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (including the Government office network) received 69 different requests for information which fell into the definition of environmental information and were handled under the environmental information regulations.

Government Offices for the Regions

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* expenditure and *(b)* administration costs of each Government office for the regions were in each year since their creation; and what the estimated figure for 2005–06 is. [15205]

Yvette Cooper: *(a)* The administrative running cost expenditure for each Government office for the period since their creation is detailed in the table. The table includes the current allocation for the present financial year, 2005–06.

(b) Programme budgets administered by the Government offices are the responsibility of the Secretaries of State for the relevant sponsor Departments. Information is however contained in GO Annual Reports, as given to the hon. Member for Brentwood and Ongar on 17 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 1463W.

Government office administrative running costs

£000

GO	*1994–95*	*1995–96*	*1996–97*	*1997–98*
North East	9,173.60	8,842.76	8,687.15	8,616.75
North West	11,593.30	9,983.71	9,839.09	9,442.59
Merseyside	4,834.10	4,753.84	4,349.95	4,199.53
Total North West/ Merseyside	16,427.40	14,737.55	14,189.04	13,642.12
Yorks and Humber	9,809.90	9,060.51	8,765.04	8,475.01
West Midlands	11,057.50	10,435.73	10,040.37	9,757.79
East Midlands	7,658.80	7,116.85	6,616.67	6,436.24
East	6,231.50	6,122.84	6,168.97	6,270.62
South West	6,741.10	7,574.14	7,140.74	6,825.73
South East	8,224.00	8,331.06	8,406.18	8,544.99
London	12,251.20	11,106.26	14,106.47	13,458.82
Total	87,575.00	83,327.70	84,120.63	82,028.07

£000

GO	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02
North East	8,618.84	8,312.05	8,197.33	9,002.29
North West	13,690.13	13,048.58	13,651.03	15,344.87
Merseyside	12.24	—	—	—
Total North West/ Merseyside	13,702.37	13,048.58	13,651.03	15,344.87
Yorks and Humber	8,683.92	8,888.68	9,357.48	10,036.85
West Midlands	9,474.35	9,330.15	9,960.76	10,295.51
East Midlands	6,754.39	6,951.28	7,335.77	8,244.80
East	6,269.43	7,005.47	7,542.48	8,631.95
South West	6,985.03	7,796.87	8,711.38	10,666.90
South East	8,561.40	8,658.61	9,477.26	10,326.44
London	13,238.12	13,715.79	13,860.98	13,161.20
Total	82,287.85	83,707.48	88,094.47	95,710.81

£000

GO	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06[1]
North East	9,954.46	12,164.59	13,811.21	12,837.67
North West	15,523.52	16,744.59	17,566.17	18,067.27
Merseyside	—	—	—	—
Total North West/ Merseyside	15,523.52	16,744.59	17,566.17	18,067.27
Yorks and Humber	10,943.77	12,344.06	13,423.28	13,471.53
West Midlands	10,662.85	13,378.54	14,957.47	14,534.15
East Midlands	8,713.24	10,955.39	11,698.82	12,940.12
East	9,355.85	12,607.17	14,223.78	13,365.66
South West	11,860.77	13,858.05	14,499.94	14,807.03
South East	10,874.74	14,105.96	14,300.26	14,987.40
London	14,038.84	16,649.56	18,793.48	18,248.20
Total	101,928.04	122,807.89	133,274.41	133,259.03

[1] Allocations for 2005–06.

Note:
GO-North West and GO-Merseyside merged during 1998–99.

Green Belt

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps the Government are taking to prevent speculative sales of green belt land. [4286]

Yvette Cooper: Green belt is a planning designation and the planning system does not control the sale of land. Planning applications would still need to be submitted for the development of green belt land. Such applications would need to be considered in light of the development plan for the area concerned and other material considerations, including national policy on green belts as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 (PPG2). There are no plans to prevent sales of green belt land.

Green Ministers

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* work his Department's Green Minister has undertaken in the last three months and *(b)* meetings his Department's Green Minister has attended in the last 12 months in an official capacity within that role. [16154]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Following the general election in May, the Cabinet Sub-Committee of Green Ministers (ENV(G) was replaced by the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Sustainable Development in Government (EE(SD) whose members are departmental Sustainable Development Ministers.

My Noble Friend Baroness Andrews was appointed as departmental Sustainable Development Minister following the general election. In July, the Minister attended a breakfast seminar for Sustainable Development Ministers to discuss the sustainable development strategy and Ministers' role in delivering it.

My Noble Friend Baroness Andrews is overseeing the preparation of the Office's Sustainable Development Action Plan.

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the meetings at which his Department has been present regarding the delivery of sustainable development across Government as co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-committee of Green Ministers. [16155]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Although the Government publish the title, membership and terms of reference of cabinet committees, it has been the practice of successive Governments not to disclose details of their proceedings.

Homelessness

Annette Brooke: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the cost of providing homelessness services for adults who have previously been in care in the last year for which figures are available. [15706]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not available centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will establish further Working Future pilot schemes to assist homeless people into employment, with particular reference to London. [15831]

Yvette Cooper: 'Working Future' will test the use of a central block grant to subsidise the cost of procuring temporary accommodation in the private sector, promote affordable rents and improve work incentives for 100 households in three London boroughs. The two year pilot will be fully evaluated as it progresses to inform any further expansion and development. The pilot is part of a wider programme of work we are taking forward with local authorities and others to halve the number of households living in temporary accommodation by 2010, provide more settled homes and help more people into training and employment.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many homeless *(a)* 16-year-olds and *(b)* 17-year-olds have been placed in bed and breakfast accommodation in each London borough in each year since 1997. [15949]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Housing

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what targets his Department has set with respect to new levels of house building within *(a)* the Bury St. Edmunds constituency and *(b)* the East of England. [15103]

Yvette Cooper: The current review of the regional spatial strategy for the east of England will determine how many homes should be built in the east of England and each district council area. It will then be for St. Edmundsbury and Mid Suffolk councils to determine whether those homes are built within their respective areas.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many housing schemes approved by local authorities in the most recent year for which figures are available were comprised of *(a)* 13 housing units, *(b)* 14 housing units and *(c)* 15 housing units. [15760]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent estimate he has made of the amount raised per year by licensing fees for homes in multiple occupation. [15838]

Yvette Cooper: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) on 5 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 308W.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many houses his Department has planned should be built in *(a)* the county of Bedfordshire, *(b)* South Bedfordshire district, *(c)* Mid-Bedfordshire district, *(d)* the borough of Bedford and *(e)* the constituency of Mid-Bedfordshire. [11017]

Yvette Cooper: The Milton Keynes and South Midlands (MKSM) sub-regional strategy together with the draft East of England plan, known also as draft revisions to regional spatial strategy (RSS) for the East of England, set out the planned scale of house building in Bedfordshire for the period 2001–2021. The MKSM sub-regional strategy was published in March 2005 and forms part of the development plan for the area. The figures proposed by the East of England regional assembly in the draft East of England plan will be tested at an examination in public commencing in November this year. The final East of England plan is expected to be published early in 2007.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what responsibilities he has to ensure the implementation of article 217 of the Housing Act 2004. [14206]

Yvette Cooper: Section 217 of the Housing Act 2004 requires the Government to take reasonable steps to ensure that by 2010 the general level of energy efficiency of residential accommodation in England has increased by at least 20 per cent. compared with the general level of such energy efficiency in 2000. Such an increase is broadly in line with the energy efficiency aim for England that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs set out in the 2004 Energy Efficiency Action Plan, in compliance with section 2(1) of the Sustainable Energy Act 2003.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister contributes to the Government's drive to improve the energy efficiency of residential accommodation through its promotion of the Sustainable Buildings Code, the raising of the standards required by the Building Regulations and the delivery of improved heating and insulation through the Decent Homes programme.

Susan Kramer: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average monthly rent for *(a)* a room in a shared house, *(b)* a one bedroom dwelling, *(c)* a two bedroom dwelling and *(d)* a three bedroom dwelling in each London borough was in the most recent year for which figures are available. [15866]

Yvette Cooper: Information on private sector rents is only collected on a sample basis and is not available for London boroughs. Social rents for local authority housing and registered social landlord housing are given in the attached spreadsheet in the form of average weekly rent excluding service charges. Information on shared accommodation is not available and bedsits have been excluded.

Latest average weekly rent for social dwellings

£

	Local authority April 2003			*Registered social landlord April 2004*		
	Number of bedrooms in dwelling					
London Borough	*1*	*2*	*3*	*1*	*2*	*3*
Barking and Dagenham	56.10	58.78	59.92	54.22	69.81	76.43
Barnet	52.69	62.29	70.63	62.12	74.57	87.40
Bexley	no stock	no stock	no stock	45.31	65.84	88.64
Brent	60.91	69.73	81.16	62.18	72.36	83.32
Bromley	no stock	no stock	no stock	57.56	71.57	82.35
Camden	61.62	71.08	80.42	65.47	76.89	87.65
City of London	62.71	69.73	75.38	63.14	67.21	79.69
Croydon	57.63	65.54	79.95	60.08	75.31	87.58
Ealing	57.48	64.05	72.64	62.01	73.56	86.65
Enfield	56.28	66.19	72.61	59.19	71.67	84.16
Greenwich	56.56	60.89	69.86	60.72	70.64	80.05
Hackney	53.37	56.70	63.81	58.91	65.49	75.42
Hammersmith and Fulham	57.74	65.01	74.00	60.50	70.62	79.59
Haringey	51.02	60.18	71.23	58.21	69.75	81.33

Latest average weekly rent for social dwellings

£

	Local authority April 2003			Registered social landlord April 2004		
	Number of bedrooms in dwelling					
London Borough	*1*	*2*	*3*	*1*	*2*	*3*
Harrow	66.56	74.34	87.50	60.54	69.77	83.71
Havering	44.53	53.66	64.18	58.26	69.39	86.98
Hillingdon	62.93	74.07	87.68	60.28	76.35	86.07
Hounslow	52.32	62.30	72.89	61.66	73.63	82.24
Islington	57.36	67.74	75.62	60.33	69.01	77.54
Kensington and Chelsea	63.84	83.19	91.14	59.53	68.49	78.33
Kingston upon Thames	60.52	67.20	79.00	62.88	76.63	87.30
Lambeth	55.88	62.82	73.67	57.42	65.57	75.53
Lewisham	50.97	58.52	66.36	56.68	66.61	78.86
Merton	50.42	60.62	69.36	58.85	73.02	83.41
Newham	49.56	59.37	69.84	60.02	72.22	81.01
Redbridge	64.53	73.21	80.07	64.42	75.03	90.10
Richmond upon Thames	no stock	no stock	no stock	64.98	72.31	76.24
Southwark	55.72	59.03	63.67	57.90	68.36	78.91
Sutton	n/a	n/a	n/a	58.93	73.56	85.30
Tower Hamlets	57.50	70.42	80.99	59.69	67.88	78.30
Waltham Forest	50.93	70.31	86.36	57.14	69.82	83.75
Wandsworth	52.51	76.45	92.35	64.19	74.98	86.35
Westminster	72.95	86.76	100.19	65.33	77.62	84.62

n/a = not available

Sources:

Local authority rents from the ODPM Second Advance Claim Form

Registered social Landlord rents from the Regulatory Statistical Return of the Housing Corporation

Alan Simpson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the oral answer from the Prime Minister to the hon. Member for North-West Leicestershire (David Taylor) of 29 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1295–96, what methodology was used to calculate the figure of £6.5 billion levered into the housing sector via stock transfers. [15140]

Yvette Cooper: The £6.5 billion levered into the housing sector via housing transfer represents the private finance secured by registered social landlords for large-scale voluntary transfers since 1997 as notified to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister when consent for the transfer was sought. This figure does not include any private finance raised for the purchase of the housing.

Invoice Payment

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of invoices were paid on time by his Department in the most recent year for which figures are available. [15226]

Jim Fitzpatrick: For financial year 2004–05 the percentage of valid invoices paid on time was 98.56 per cent.

IT Failures

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what computerisation or IT failures have occurred in public sector projects managed by his Department in each year since 1997; what the contracted cost of the project was in each case; and what estimate he has made of the direct and indirect costs of failure or breakdown in each case. [14364]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was formed on 29 May 2002. Records for IT projects below £90,000 are not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

There have been no failures of IT projects above that threshold recorded since the creation of the Office. Like many public bodies the ODPM uses recognised project management methods, such as prince2 and the gateway process promoted by the Office of Government Commerce, to ensure that projects are successful. In addition the ODPM created a project and programme management (PPM) team in February 2004 to support the embedding of project and programme management skills in the ODPM.

Local Government Employees (Political Activities)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the Government expects to publish its conclusions on the consultation on the code of conduct for local government employees and restrictions on political activities. [15241]

Mr. Woolas: We are considering the response to this consultation as part of a wider review, including the Standards Board's own review of the code of conduct for members, of the conduct regime for local government. We plan to announce our conclusions on the way forward later this autumn, once we have received the Board's recommendations for the members' code.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister on what wage data and calculations the area cost adjustments are based. [15663]

Mr. Woolas: The area cost adjustment (ACA) is the element of the funding formula that reflects variation in the cost of service delivery between local authorities. It has two components. The labour cost adjustment is the largest component and takes account of variation in local authority pay costs. The rates cost adjustment is a much smaller and accounts for variations in business rates costs. In 2005–06 it was calculated using the following data:

New earnings survey data from 2001, 2002 and 2003;

Base estimate returns 1992–93;

Rateable values and hereditaments at 1 August 2004;

Estimates of office hereditaments and floorspace 2003;

The 2005 revaluation of local authority schools undertaken by the valuation office;

Gross non-domestic rates and increases and reductions in rate yields, as supplied by authorities to the First Secretary of State on the national non-domestic rates provisional contributions return 2004–05, and the total resident population as at 30 June 2003.

Detailed information on the calculation of the ACA is available on the ODPM website at:

http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/0506/acamethQ56s.pdf

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is currently consulting on options to change the local government funding formula, including options for changing the ACA calculation. The consultation document is available at on the ODPM website at:

http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/0607/consult/index.htm

The consultation ends on 10 October 2005.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 5 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 315W, on local government finance, what the recommended levels of cash reserves were for each London borough from the district auditor. [16341]

Mr. Woolas: No information is collected centrally on any views expressed.

A local authority external auditor may express views on the reserves held by the authority, but it is for the authority to decide on the level of reserves it should budget for. It is not the role of the auditor to recommend a level.

Any view expressed by the external auditor of a London borough on the adequacy of the council's cash reserves would be a matter between the council and the auditor.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much in *(a)* revenue support grant and *(b)* specific grants in (i) cash and (ii) real terms has been provided to the City of York in each year since 1997–98. [16348]

Mr. Woolas: The amounts of *(a)* revenue support grant and *(b)* specific grants inside Aggregate External Finance (AEF) City of York has received in cash and real terms each year since 1997–98 are shown respectively in Table A and Table B.

Table A: Revenue support grant in cash and real terms provided to the City of York in each year since 1997–98

£000

	Cash	Real terms (2004–05 prices)
1997–98	38,597	45,338
1998–99	39,274	44,966
1999–2000	39,478	44,328
2000–01	36,900	40,898
2001–02	40,309	43,599
2002–03	35,890	37,624
2003–04	45,361	46,325
2004–05	51,761	51,761

Source:
ODPM Revenue Outturn (RO) data, ONS GDP deflators

Table B: Specific grant inside Aggregate External Finance (AEF) in cash and real terms provided to the City of York in each year since 1997–98

£000

	Cash	Real terms (2004–05 prices)
1997–98	3,128	3,674
1998–99	4,113	4,709
1999–2000	6,185	6,945
2000–01	10,977	12,166
2001–02	15,044	16,272
2002–03	21,172	22,195
2003–04	31,192	31,855
2004–05	31,743	31,743

Source:
ODPM Revenue Outturn (RO) data, ONS GDP deflators

Comparisons across years may not be valid due to changing local authority responsibilities. Additionally, revenue support grant can go up or down from one year to the next as a result of decreases and increases in the amount of redistributed business rates received by the authority.

Specific grants inside AEF are those revenue grants paid for councils' core services (such as waste collection), excluding funding for local authorities' housing management.

The real terms figures have been revalued for previous years at 2004–05 prices using the latest GDP deflators.

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much funding local authorities in England received from central Government during the last financial year for which figures are available. [16597]

Mr. Woolas: In 2004–05 local government received £60,357 million of central Government funding.

Notes:
Central Government funding is defined here as the sum of specific grants inside Aggregate external finance (AEF), formula grant (revenue support grant, redistributed business rates and police grant) and Greater London authority (GLA) grant.

Source:
"Local authority revenue expenditure and financing England: Provisional outturn 2004–05" found at: http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/stats/natstats.htm#rev

Local Government Ombudsman

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many complaints the local government ombudsman has received about each London borough in each year since 1997; [15567]

(2) how many cases the local government ombudsman received relating to each London borough in each year since 1997 [15591]

Mr. Woolas: The local government ombudsman does not make a distinction between complaints received about and complaints relating to local authorities.

Information held by the ombudsman on the number of complaints relating to each London borough since 1997 is shown on the following tables:

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*
Barking and Dagenham	78	83	98	63
Barnet	76	101	126	121
Bexley	25	36	36	46
Brent	211	276	337	289
Bromley	46	63	82	84
Camden	175	175	149	157
City of London	7	11	7	7
Croydon	106	118	137	182
Ealing	147	222	257	308
Enfield	73	108	107	92
Greenwich	98	96	103	134
Hackney	251	285	465	961
Hammersmith and Fulham	71	101	87	100
Haringey	164	179	170	155
Harrow	35	50	43	52
Havering	51	56	41	50
Hillingdon	48	57	62	64
Hounslow	123	110	128	139
Islington	243	350	417	667
Kensington and Chelsea	66	64	56	68
Kingston upon Thames	34	47	49	38
Lambeth	649	629	1,061	1,202
Lewisham	218	204	241	223
Merton	49	51	58	59
Newham	234	204	233	263
Redbridge	63	66	85	61
Richmond upon Thames	50	72	51	50
Southwark	202	308	344	388
Sutton	37	54	59	54
Tower Hamlets	186	225	167	177
Waltham Forest	110	153	169	183
Wandsworth	129	155	158	149
Westminster	158	110	178	322

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Barking and Dagenham	78	95	133	103
Barnet	98	111	131	155
Bexley	37	31	43	31
Brent	192	204	201	174
Bromley	118	115	124	110
Camden	191	176	160	258
City of London	8	12	9	14
Croydon	136	114	127	135
Ealing	336	311	347	254
Enfield	109	95	103	114
Greenwich	88	73	102	102
Hackney	650	431	395	412
Hammersmith and Fulham	82	101	107	90
Haringey	187	199	203	154
Harrow	59	52	38	61
Havering	66	65	72	85
Hillingdon	69	67	58	60
Hounslow	128	157	160	169
Islington	433	377	316	222
Kensington and Chelsea	79	48	76	45
Kingston upon Thames	36	42	42	35
Lambeth	1,050	606	647	570
Lewisham	228	252	240	249
Merton	60	61	97	76
Newham	223	187	176	165
Redbridge	74	65	70	83
Richmond upon Thames	49	50	47	50
Southwark	374	334	296	309
Sutton	63	56	63	66
Tower Hamlets	170	182	191	175
Waltham Forest	154	144	172	179
Wandsworth	150	138	102	110
Westminster	251	196	273	355

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many complaints he has received regarding the operation of the current local government ombudsman. [16437]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Local Government Pensions

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the surplus or deficit was of the local government pension scheme for *(a)* Suffolk county council and *(b)* each local authority area within Suffolk in each of the last eight years. [15128]

Mr. Woolas: The Local Government Pension Scheme in England is administered by 81 separate pension fund authorities. The Suffolk County Council Pension Fund is the responsibility of the county council; district councils are employer-members. Actuarial valuations of the pension fund take place every three years, as required by the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1997. Contribution rates for each employer are set having regard to the employers' liabilities and the investment programme of the fund. The rates are designed to ensure that Scheme pension funds remain solvent and meet their statutory pension payment responsibilities. Individual local authorities in Suffolk, other than the county council, do not have separate pension funds. The assets and liabilities for the Suffolk county council pension fund for the last three actuarial valuation exercises are as follows:

Suffolk CC pension fund

	Assets (£ million)	*Liabilities (£ million)*	*Solvency (Percentage)*
1998	517.9	626.3	81
2001	702.0	835.0	84
2004	775.8	1,035.9	75

London Fire Emergency Control Room

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the London fire emergency control Room at Canary Wharf meets the Government's resilience criteria; and if he will make a statement. [15648]

Jim Fitzpatrick: London is the only region of England which already has a regional fire and rescue control centre. The London regional control centre was planned before the events of 9/11 and before the current resilience criteria were drawn up. Certain improvements to security have been introduced as a result of the events of 9/11.

The FiReControl project provides for London to be part of the project towards the end of the programme. Decisions on London's control arrangements will be made in discussion with the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority.

Opinion Surveys

Mr. Weir: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* subject matter and *(b)* dates were of opinion survey research undertaken by the Department and its agencies in the last 12 months; if he will place copies of the results of each survey in the Library; which companies were used in conducting the research; and how much each was paid. [14805]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Nine projects involving opinion survey research have been undertaken by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister or its agencies between September 2004 and September 2005.

1. A Planning Inspectorate customer satisfaction survey, conducted in March 2005 by Faber Maunsell, cost £46,000. Results are available on the web at http://www.planning-inspectorate.gov.uk/pins/statement_purpose/surveys/customer_satisfaction_survey_2004.htm

2. Consultancy research into public attitudes and behaviours with regard to domestic fire safety and the effects of the ODPM Smoke Alarm Maintenance campaign. The third phase of this involved pre-campaign research in August 2004 and post campaign research in November 2004, conducted by Andrew Irving Associates, cost £15,000. A copy of the report will be placed in the Library shortly.

3. Consultancy research into public attitudes, awareness and behaviours towards fire safety in the home, to inform future fire safety publicity campaigns and to allow assessment of the effectiveness of campaigns. The research, conducted by Andrew Irving Associates, began in August 2005. Cost for the period August 2005-March 2006 is £88,000. A copy of the report will be placed in the Library shortly.

4. A telephone survey of applicants for planning consent for minor householder developments plus an interview survey of neighbours of houses where such applications have been made. The survey, conducted by MORI, started in August 2005. The full cost of the survey will be in the region of £63,000. A copy of the research will be made available in the Library on completion of the project.

5. Research to identify the views of the able bodied as to whether the Part M Building Regulation requirements have enhanced or been detrimental to the functionality of the dwelling for the householder, providing an evaluation of the 1999 amendments as required by statute. Conducted by the Building Research Establishment between May and August 2005, cost £51,000. The intention is to publish the results once the project has been completed.

6. The English House Condition Survey collects information on the condition of housing stock. It also includes interviews with occupants and some questions cover attitudes to the home, property maintenance, the neighbourhood and the landlord. It runs continuously and is conducted by the Office for National Statistics. The cost of the opinion survey element is estimated at £75,000 per annum. Published reports are made available via the ODPM website at www.odpm.gov.uk/ehcs. The latest results were published in March 2005. Copies of published reports are in the Library

7. A Review of the Role of Property Owners in Business Improvement Districts included three surveys, all conducted by York Consulting with McCallum Layton:

A postal survey of BID Managers in July 2005, cost £3,750.

A telephone survey of property owners involved in BIDS in September 2005, cost £7,200.

A telephone survey of property owners not involved in BIDS in September 2005, cost £9,900.

The results of all three will be published and placed in the library on completion.

8. ODPM commissioned research on attitudes to local public services and how they should be paid for from BMG Research in April 2005 on behalf of the Lyons Inquiry. This involved a face to face survey and the total cost of the research was £93,300. The inquiry intends to publish findings from this research in due course and a copy will be placed in the Library.

9. A national tracker survey of public attitudes to local government and its services, involving a postal survey of a nationally representative sample of members of the public. This runs from June to September 2005 and was conducted by BMG Research at a cost of £36,000. The findings from this research will be published and a copy placed in the Library.

Overcrowding

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister, what assessment his Office has made of the health effects of overcrowding in housing. [15583]

Yvette Cooper: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 18 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1446W.

Ms Keeble: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will publish the consultation on overcrowding standards. [16011]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is considering the options for reviewing the statutory overcrowding standards and a decision will be taken on the timing of consultation as soon as possible.

Departmental Stationery

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of *(a)* copying paper and *(b)* paper for printed publications used by his Department in (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained in each case. [16150]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The paper used by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for *(a)* copying paper in 2003–04 and 2004–05 contained 100 per cent. post-consumer waste.

The paper used for *(b)* printed publications between 2003–04 and 2004–05 contained no less than 75 per cent. post-consumer waste.

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list his Department's sites which are included in the Watermark project. [16151]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister joined Watermark on its formation in May 2002, and submitted data for its central London HQ buildings Eland House and Ashdown House, as well as for the Planning Inspectorate Agency based at Temple Quay House, Bristol, six Government Offices and six Rent Service Buildings.

The Watermark Project was managed by OGCbuying.solutions between April 2000 and March 2003 and was therefore effectively drawn to a conclusion over two years ago.

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister by what date his Department expects to implement in full the targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 percent. recycled with a minimum of 75 percent. post-consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications brought by the Department is 60 percent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 post-consumer waste. [16152]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has already met the targets in full. All photocopying paper used by the Office has a 100 percent. post-consumer waste content. Paper purchased for all ODPM publications has no less that 75 percent. post-consumer waste content.

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports; and what (i) the name of each paper used and (ii) the (A) recycled and (B) post-consumer recycled content of each paper. [16207]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The main supplier of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes is Banner using Evolve Office comprising 100 per cent. post-consumer waste.

The paper for *(d)* reports is supplied by Robert Home, Premier Paper, McNoughton's and Howard Smith. All papers used contain a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste.

The papers used are as follows:

Evolve Business—containing 100 per cent. post-consumer waste.

Cyclus print/offset—containing 100 per cent. post-consumer waste.

Revive un-coated—containing 80 per cent. post-consumer waste and 20 per cent. elemental chlorine free pulp.

Revive matt/silk containing 75 per cent. post-consumer waste and 25 per cent. elemental chlorine free pulp.

Greencoat velvet containing 80 per cent. post-consumer waste and 20 per cent. totally chlorine free pulp.

Evolution satin/gloss containing 75 per cent. post-consumer and 20 per cent. elemental chlorine free pulp.

Parish/Town Councils

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* consultation and *(b)* advisory documents were sent to parish councils in the parliamentary constituency of Mid-Bedfordshire by his Department in each year since 2000. [16622]

Mr. Woolas: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to the hon. Member for Shrewsbury and Atcham (Daniel Kawczynski) on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 2093W.

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many applications for the abolition of *(a)* parish councils and *(b)* town councils he has received from district and unitary authorities in each of the past 10 years; and how many he has granted. [15274]

Mr. Woolas: Since 1997, there have been a number of requests to abolish parishes (and as a consequence, their parish or town councils) as part of proposals to transfer all or part of those parishes to other parish councils. There have only been three requests to abolish parishes outright—all in 2003. Of these, one has been agreed and the parish council is due to be abolished with effect from 1 April 2006.

Information about requests made before 1997 is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Planning Development Grant

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much money was allocated for planning development grant in each year since its introduction; and what the estimated budget is for *(a)* 2005–06, *(b)* 2006–07 and *(c)* 2007–08. [15245]

Yvette Cooper: The planning delivery grant totalled £50 million in 2003–04, its year of introduction; £130 million in 2004–05 and £170 million in 2005–06. The estimated budgets for 2006–07 and 2007–08 are respectively £135 million and £120 million.

Private Finance Initiative

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 13 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 124W, on the private finance initiative, what total value of assets and liabilities for each of the listed private finance initiatives and public private partnerships is recorded on the Government Balance Sheet; what proportion of assets and liabilities is listed; what the accounting treatment is for assets and liabilities; and whether it is compatible with *(a)* generally-accepted accounting practices and *(b)* international financial reporting standards. [15955]

Mr. Woolas: Further to the answer given on 13 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 124W, to the hon. Member, the Private Finance Initiatives listed are all off-balance sheet and not recorded on the Government Balance Sheet.

(a) The balance sheet treatment of Private Finance Initiatives and Public Private Partnerships are determined by an independent auditor following United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, in accordance with Financial Reporting Standards issued by the Independent Accounting Standards Board.

(b) Currently there are no international reporting standards on Private Finance Initiatives and Public Private Partnerships.

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps his Department *(a)* has taken and *(b)* plans to take to make the private finance initiative process more accountable and transparent in terms of environmental sustainability. [16160]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Kingston and Surbiton (Mr. Davey) on 7 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 875W.

In July 2002, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister together with DEFRA, OGC and DfT jointly issued a guidance, Green Public Private Partnerships, on how to include environmental considerations within PFI and PPP projects. This added to guidance on PFI projects issued by the Treasury and supports commitments to take forward best environmental practice and sustainable development within the public sector.

Since the Green PPP guidance there have been further developments. The procurement section of the 'Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate' was published in October. This is the Government's main vehicle for systematically assessing, reporting and improving Government performance in managing its own land and buildings to improve sustainability. The procurement section includes targets

mandating Government Departments to implement a sustainable procurement strategy, environmental clauses and an appropriate training programme.

Furthermore, the Third Annual report 'Sustainable Development in Government (SDiG)' was published in November 2004. This contains data based on the financial year April 2003 to March 2004. DEFRA monitors Departments' performance against the framework targets in the annual SDiG reports.

Private Landlords

Susan Kramer: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what legal requirements private landlords have to meet in relation to *(a)* electrical safety, *(b)* hygiene levels and *(c)* structural soundness of the property they are letting; and what mechanisms are in place to monitor and enforce these. [15861]

Yvette Cooper: In relation to the legislation for which this Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is responsible, the Housing Act 1985 contains the housing fitness standard which determines whether a dwelling is reasonably suitable for occupation. Under these provisions, local authorities may require owners and landlords of housing accommodation to deal with defects relating to structural stability, serious disrepair (which may include dangerous electrical wiring), sanitation and hygiene. The fitness requirements are to be replaced by a new framework under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004. The Housing Health and Safety Rating System will enable local authorities to assess whether any of 29 health and safety hazards—including those relating to poor sanitation or hygiene, structural collapse and electrical safety—are present in a dwelling, and to require landlords to take action to protect occupiers from such hazards.

The 2004 Act will also enable local housing authorities to impose conditions on properties required to be licensed under the Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) provisions in Part 2, or under the selective licensing provisions in Part 3. Such conditions must include requirements on the licence holder to keep electrical appliances provided by him in a safe condition and proper working order and to supply to the authority, on demand, a declaration of the safety of such appliances. A breach of a licence condition may result in the licence being revoked and/or a fine of up to £5,000.

Part 1 of the 2004 Act also contains a general duty on local housing authorities to keep the housing conditions in their area under review with a view to identifying any action that they need to take in connection with housing conditions, licensing or renewal.

The requirements of the Building Regulations 2000 and subsequent amendments may apply where a landlord plans to undertake building work as defined in the regulations. This includes work associated with electrical safety, hygiene and structural soundness. Should a building fall into such disrepair that it becomes dangerous, then the Building Act 1984 provides for the landlord to be required, under a court order obtained by the local authority, to remedy the hazard.

Railways (Fire Regulations)

John McDonnell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the railway stations and premises which are covered by the Fire Precautions (Sub-Surface Railway Stations) Regulations 1989. [16339]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Railway stations and premises which are subject to the Fire Precautions (Sub-surface Railway Stations) Regulations 1989 are identified by the local fire and rescue authority, who enforce the regulations. Details of the names and locations of the individual premises concerned are not held centrally. [However, the statistics we collect show that in 2003–04—the latest year for which figures are available—168 such premises were known to fire and rescue authorities.]

Regeneration (Wolverhampton)

Mr. McFadden: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much has been spent by his Department on regeneration projects in *(a)* the City of Wolverhampton and *(b)* constituency of Wolverhampton South East since 1997. [15095]

Yvette Cooper: Under the neighbourhood renewal fund, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has provided funding totalling £37.1 million between 2001–02 and 2007–08 to tackle disadvantage in deprived neighbourhoods in Wolverhampton.

English Partnerships is the national regeneration agency sponsored by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. English Partnership's expenditure in Wolverhampton in recent years has been in connection with Priority Sites Ltd, EP's commercial development joint venture with the Royal Bank of Scotland. Priority Sites expenditure began in 2002 and currently stands at £591,000. Under the former PIP (property investment programme), £2.6 million was spent between 1997 and 2001. English Partnerships provided a further £991,000 to Advantage West Midlands for land reclamation programme projects between 1997 and 2000. This makes EP's total spend in the city of Wolverhampton between 1997 to 2005 £4.2 million.

A further £628,225 in grants has been provided to Wolverhampton from 2001 to date as part of the neighbourhood and street crime warden schemes, both funded by ODPM.

In addition, the Government awarded £53.5 million to the Wolverhampton new deal for communities partnership in 2001 under Round 2 of the Government's new deal for communities programme. The Partnership is now in year five of the 10-year programme and to date has spent approximately £10.3 million of the approved grant.

Wolverhampton has also benefited from Objective 2 European regional development funds and since 1997 over £27.2 million has been spent directly in the city of Wolverhampton area.

Regional Assemblies

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much public funding each regional assembly has received in each year since their creation; and what the estimated levels for 2005–06 are. [15250]

Yvette Cooper: The total level of Government grant made to regional assemblies by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister since 2001 is tabled as follows.

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
North East	500,000	600,000	1,408,000	1,708,000	1,708,000
North West	500,000	600,000	1,837,000	2,536,000	2,536,000
Yorkshire and the Humber	500,000	600,000	1,655,000	1,923,000	1,923,000
West Midlands	500,000	600,000	1,671,000	2,071,000	2,071,000
East Midlands	500,000	600,000	1,631,000	2,056,000	2,056,000
East	500,000	600,000	1,874,000	2,112,000	2,112,000
South East	500,000	600,000	2,186,000	3,280,000	3,280,000
South West	500,000	600,000	1,613,000	2,101,000	2,101,000
English Regions Network	1,000,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Total	5,000,000	5,000,000	14,075,000	17,987,000	17,987,000

The grant supports the assemblies in the performance of their designated functions to scrutinise the work of the regional development agencies; fulfil their regional planning responsibilities; and for the development of their strategic regional role.

The increase in funding from 2003–04 was granted in recognition of the statutory responsibilities that were placed on them as regional planning bodies by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what powers the West Midlands Regional Assembly has to amend, delete or review *(a)* Green Belt designation, *(b)* areas of outstanding natural beauty designation and *(c)* Site of Special Scientific Interest designation. [15251]

Yvette Cooper: In relation to Green Belt designation, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 14 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 271–72W. The regional assemblies do not have powers to amend, delete or review Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the role of the West Midlands Regional Assembly is with regards to waste and incineration policy. [15252]

Yvette Cooper: As the regional planning body, the West Midlands Regional Assembly is responsible for keeping its regional spatial strategy (RSS) under review and preparing revisions. The RSS should include a concise strategy for waste management in line with national policy set out in Planning Policy Statement 10 "Planning for Sustainable Waste Management" and be capable of being carried forward into local development documents prepared by waste planning authorities. The strategy for waste management should comprise a distribution of waste tonnage requiring management, a pattern of waste management facilities of national, regional or sub-regional significance, and supporting policies.

Regional Planning and Housing Boards

Mr. Love: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he intends to complete the merger of Regional Planning and Housing Boards; and if he will make a statement. [16105]

Yvette Cooper: The Government are committed to merging the functions of Regional Planning Bodies and Regional Housing Boards. Details of how this will be achieved, including timing will be announced in due course.

Residential Sprinklers

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of recommendations arising from the survey into low-cost residential sprinklers; and over what timescale he expects to implement the recommendations. [15329]

Jim Fitzpatrick: ODPM has commissioned a research project into the potential for lower cost sprinkler systems suitable for domestic premises. The final results and recommendations from this work are not yet available, but early indications are that such a system is a practical possibility. ODPM expect to receive a final report from the contractors later this month. Assuming that the final report is positive, we would hope to take forward the debate on the development and application of such systems in managing risk, both within the fire and rescue service-community, the wider fire industry and other interested parties. Plans for this wider debate will be finalised in the coming months and we will aim to ensure that all stakeholders have the opportunity to join the debate.

Section 106 Planning Agreements

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what information he has received on the operation of section 106 planning agreements in London in respect of local authorities receiving payments in lieu of housing developments; and if he will make a statement. [16205]

Yvette Cooper: Information on individual section 106 agreements is held by local planning authorities and not collated centrally.

The research report "The Value for Money of Delivering Affordable Housing through Section 106" published on 18 July (available on the ODPM website at: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_planning/documents/page/odpm_plan_039124.hcsp) shows that in 2002–03 just over £11 million was received by local planning authorities in London in commuted sums to provide affordable housing off-site, in lieu of on-site provision.

Sickness Absence

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many working days were lost due to sickness absence in his Department in the most recent year for which figures are available. [15229]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created on 29 May 2002. The number of days lost due to sickness are contained in the annual report "Analysis of Sickness Absence in the Civil Service" published by the Cabinet Office. Table A of the report gives details of both the average working days absence per staff year and the number of staff years on which that calculation is based on. The most recent of which (for calendar year 2003) was announced by ministerial statement on 1 November and copies placed in the Libraries of the House. Reports for 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002 are also available in the Library of the House and on the Cabinet Office website at:

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_of_the_civil_service/conditions_of_service/occupational_health/publications/index.asp

The Office of The Deputy Prime Minister is committed to managing sickness absence effectively and is putting in place the recommendations of the recently published report "Managing Sickness Absence in the Public Sector".

Social Housing

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether it is Government policy to reduce the number of registered social landlords with fewer than 1,000 units in management. [14709]

Yvette Cooper: The Government do not have a policy to reduce the number of registered social landlords with fewer than 1,000 units in management.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many dwellings have been built *(a)* by local authorities, *(b)* by housing associations and *(c)* in total in each year since 1990, broken down by number of bedrooms. [15581]

Yvette Cooper: Housing statistics table no. 204 published on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's internet site shows the number of dwellings built in England by tenure for each year since 1990–91. Table 251 shows the percentages of dwellings built with different numbers of bedrooms.

The respective ODPM internet addresses for these tables are:

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_housing/documents/page/odpm_house_604034.xls

[Housing—Housing Statistics—Live Tables—Housebuilding—Table 204]

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_housing/documents/page/odpm_house_604058.xls

[Housing—Housing Statistics—Live Tables—Housebuilding—Table 251]

Andrew Stunell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much money has been allocated to improving heating and insulation standards in social housing in each year since 2000, broken down by expenditure incurred by *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* registered social landlords; and what these figures are as a percentage of all social landlord expenditure on remedial work to the housing stock. [15723]

Yvette Cooper: Data are only available for local authorities set out in the following table. The figures show what local authorities have spent/plan to spend on improving heating and insulation.

Over the period shown in the table, this represents 16 per cent. of all expenditure on remedial works.

£000

Financial year	*Total LA expenditure on central heating and insulation*
1999–2000	246,725
2000–01	283,033
2001–02	318,559
2002–03	333,034
2003–04	385,548
2004–05	405,352

Mr. Love: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many local authority homes were under tenant management in *(a)* England and *(b)* Greater London in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [16107]

Yvette Cooper: The number of local authority homes under tenant management since 1997 is as follows:

	In England and Wales	*In Greater London*
1997	50,148	30,321
1998	53,969	32,546
1999	54,806	33,080
2000	56,228	34,502
2001	57,629	35,296
2002	58,152	35,819
2003	60,253	35,819
2004	62,029	36,745
2005	62,029	36,745

These homes are managed by around 250 tenant management organisations (TMO). Research has shown that in most cases TMOs are performing better than their landlord host local authorities and a majority are engaged in community development activities that contribute to the strengthening of their communities and social networks. They are a good example of community empowerment and we want to continue to promote and encourage the development of the TMO sector.

There are no local authority homes under tenant management in Wales.

South London Family Housing Association

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he is taking in response to the Audit Commission's recent inspection report on the South London Family Housing Association; and in what circumstances funding for the Association may be suspended. [15538]

Yvette Cooper: Following the publication of the Audit Commission's report the Housing Corporation, as statutory regulator for registered social landlords (RSLs), has placed both South London Family Housing Association Limited (SLFHA Ltd.) and its parent association, Horizon Housing Group, into supervision. The supervision process ensures that both SLFHA Ltd. and Horizon Housing Group produce and implement action plans to address the weaknesses evidenced by the

inspection report findings. The RSLs will remain in supervision until the Corporation is satisfied that all issues have been addressed.

RSLs that are placed under supervision are considered on a case by case basis. If the Housing Corporation was of the view that an RSL in supervision was in such a financial position that public funds would appear to be at risk, no further funding at all would be provided to the RSL until the issues in question were resolved.

In the case of SLFHA Ltd. and Horizon, where the Corporation had confirmed, prior to the imposition of supervision status, that grant would be provided for specific schemes, that grant will still be made. Development schemes for which grant had been allocated to the Horizon Group but where formal confirmation had not been made prior to the imposition of supervision status are in the process of being re-allocated to another RSL. Neither Horizon Housing Group or SLFHA Ltd. will be permitted to bid for any grant funding or take further properties into ownership or management, while they remain in supervision.

Standards Board

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost of Standards Board investigations in each London borough was in each year since 1999. [15436]

Mr. Woolas: The Standards Board was established in March 2001.

The Standards Board does not record information in the format requested. It estimates that the current average cost of an investigation into allegations of a breach of the code of conduct is around £5,000 per case.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many cases were reported to the Standards Board for England in each year since 1999 by each London borough. [15437]

Mr. Woolas: The Standards Board does not record information in the format requested.

Information on the number of complaints received about councillors in London boroughs is shown in the table. The information dates from 2001–02 as the Standards Board was established in March 2001.

Complaints received against councillors in London boroughs (by financial year)

	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
Barking and Dagenham	0	0	0	3	2
Barnet	0	5	5	3	4
Bexley	0	0	9	35	0
Brent	0	4	22	5	2
Bromley	0	1	6	5	0
Camden	0	3	5	11	9
Corporation of London	0	4	0	0	0
Croydon	0	1	1	3	2
Ealing	0	2	3	9	1
Enfield	0	1	3	3	61
Greenwich	0	0	1	33	1
Hackney	0	2	1	3	2
Hammersmith and Fulham	1	1	5	2	0
Haringey	0	3	5	5	0
Harrow	0	2	2	5	6
Havering	0	2	8	7	2
Hillingdon	0	0	9	3	0
Hounslow	0	1	2	6	10
Islington	0	6	8	16	7
Kensington and Chelsea	0	0	0	2	0
Kingston upon Thames	0	1	8	2	0
Lambeth	0	6	3	4	1
Lewisham	0	1	2	2	0
Merton	0	0	1	0	0
Newham	0	0	2	4	0
Redbridge	0	0	3	7	8
Richmond upon Thames	0	1	4	8	0
Southwark	0	8	5	5	0
Sutton	0	3	6	2	1
Tower Hamlets	0	1	5	7	5
Waltham Forest	0	2	0	1	25
Wandsworth	0	0	3	3	1
Westminster City Council	0	0	2	1	1

Supermarkets (Planning)

Keith Vaz: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps his Department will take to ensure that the forthcoming guidance notes accompanying PPS6 will ensure competition and choice for consumers in the supermarket sector. [15891]

Yvette Cooper: The ODPM, in consultation with stakeholders, is preparing practice guidance on assessing need and impact for retail and leisure development, and other main town centre uses, as foreshadowed in Planning Policy Statement PPS6: Planning for Town Centres.

This guidance will reflect the Government's objectives, set out in PPS6, which include: enhancing consumer choice by making provision for a range of shopping, leisure and local services, which allow genuine choice to meet the needs of the entire community; and supporting efficient, competitive and innovative retail, leisure, tourism and other sectors, with improving productivity.

Supporting People Programme

Mr. Walker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the payments made to Hertfordshire from the Supporting People programme in each financial year since 1997; what payments he expects will be made in *(a)* 2005–06, *(b)* 2006–07 and *(c)* 2007–08; and if he will make a statement. [15034]

Mr. Woolas: The Supporting People programme was launched in April 2003, in the two years preceding this date Hertfordshire received Supporting People Administration Grant as a contribution towards the costs of implementing the programme. Since 2003 Hertfordshire has been allocated both Support People Administration Grant and Supporting People Programme grant. No decision has been taken regarding individual grant allocations in either 2006–07 or 2007–08 although the Government have committed that no authority will receive a cash increase greater than 10 per cent. or reduction greater than 5 per cent. in either of these years. Supporting People payments made to Hertfordshire are listed as follows:

	Total (£000)
2001–02	287
2002–03	592
2003–04	23,023
2004–05	23,402
2005–06	22,057

Sustainable Development

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the annual spending by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies on (i) electricity use and (ii) water and sewerage services has been in each year since 2002–03. [16123]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The costs of electricity and water and sewerage services for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, and its Agencies since 2002–03 are as follows:

£

	(a) Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (excluding Government Offices)	*(b) Agencies*
Electricity 2002–03	369,009	562,590
Electricity 2003–04	450,239	782,454
Electricity 2004–05	526,517	715,145
Water and sewerage 2002–03	[1]28,589	106,883
Water and sewerage 2003–04	[1]32,034	120,758
Water and sewerage 2004–05	[1]18,485	98,338

[1] Not including Hempstead House, where cost is included within the service charge.

The figures for 2004–05 have yet to be independently verified by DEFRA and therefore should be considered as provisional.

This answer does not include the buildings occupied by Government Offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what change there has been in road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions from his Department against a baseline year of *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05; [16124]

(2) what reduction there has been in road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions from his Department against a baseline year of *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05. [16163]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information requested is not available. CO_2 emissions cannot presently be calculated, as much of the mileage is by hire and private car and existing travel claim systems do not record the size of the vehicle engine.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is currently assessing methods and systems to record the required information in order to meet our framework for sustainable development target—B1: To reduce road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions by at least 10 percent., to be achieved through any combination of:

(a) reducing total business vehicle mileage;

(b) improving the average fuel efficiency of vehicles;

(c) reducing total fuel consumed.

This answer does not include data from Government Offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what has been identified as the most significant sustainable development impact in relation to operation of the estate of his Department. [16153]

Jim Fitzpatrick: A recent assessment of Sustainable Development impacts within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, carried out as part of ISO 14001:2004 accreditation, identified procurement as the most significant sustainable development impact.

Officials are currently working on delivering the required Sustainable Procurement Strategy as detailed in Target F1 of the Framework for Sustainable Development of the Government Estate. Standard clauses have been added to our contracts to ensure responsible supply chain management, reducing the ecological impact of any purchases made.

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what steps he is taking to assist the delivery of sustainable development within Government; [16156]

(2) what progress has been made on his Department's Sustainable Development Strategy; [16157]

(3) what steps have been taken by his Department to review its arrangements for public reporting of its sustainable development impacts. [16158]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister played a full part in preparing the UK Sustainable Development Strategy "Securing the Future", which was launched in March 2005. We will be producing a Sustainable Development Action Plan in December 2005, which will set out the steps we are taking to contribute to the delivery of the strategy, including arrangements for monitoring progress.

The Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate is the Government's main vehicle for systematically assessing, reporting and improving Government performance in managing its own land and buildings sustainably. The ODPM will be publishing its first Sustainable Operations Report covering its work and results on delivering the targets contained within the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate before the end of the year. This will also build on the data reported annually in the Sustainable Development in Government Report.

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment his Department has made *(a)* of the environment impact and *(b)* against sustainable development criteria of the bids made for contracts awarded by his Department; and if he will make a statement. [16159]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister places high priority on sustainable development and environmental impact in its procurement process and in this respect environmental and sustainability issues are considered when awarding contracts where they are considered relevant to the contract and where they have been included in the contract specification.

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of electricity used by buildings in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies came from renewable sources for each year since 2003–04. [16162]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Since 2003–04 the total proportion of renewable electricity used by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in its buildings in the *(a)* the Office and *(b)* its agencies each year is as follows:

Percentage

	(a) Office[1]	*(b) Agencies*
2003–04	98	29
2004–05[2]	98	46

[1] Not including Government Offices.

[2] The figures for 2004–05 have yet to undergo independent verification and so must be regarded as provisional.

This answer does not include the buildings occupied by Government Offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what reduction there has been in water consumption by his Department between 2002 and 31 March 2005. [16164]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The reduction in water consumption within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's estate between 2002 to 31 March 2005 is as follows:

Sustainable development—reduction in water consumption

	Consumption (m^3)	*Reduction (m^3)*	*Percentage reduction (year on year)*
2002–03	161,096.	—	—
2003–04	141,532	19,564	12.14
2004–05	132,787	8,745	6.18

Note:
These figures do not include water used for training purposes at the Fire Service College.

This answer does not include the buildings occupied by Government offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

These reductions are assisting ODPM in achieving the Sustainable Development in Government water target (C2) of 7.7m^3/person/annum.

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister at which non-office sites on his Department's estates he has identified opportunities for significant water savings. [16165]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has previously identified the following non-office sites as being likely to provide opportunities for significant water savings:

The Fire Service College, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire.

The Queen Elizabeth the Second Conference Centre, London.

Since 2002–03 the Fire Service college's non-training water usage has reduced by 29 per cent. Water usage in the QEII Conference Centre has reduced by 4 per cent. in the same period, which is a significant reduction on a year ago when it had increased by 13 per cent. The water consumption in both establishments has decreased despite the increased business use of the establishments.

Initiatives are planed to further reduce consumption although savings are unlikely to be as significant as those achieved to date.

Since November 2002, DEFRA has monitored Departments' performance against the framework targets in the annual 'Sustainable Development in Government' reports (http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/sdig/reports/index.htm).

Tees Valley Coastal Arc

Vera Baird: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what kinds of development the designation of Redcar as part of the Tees Valley Coastal Arc is intended to *(a)* encourage and *(b)* discourage. [15641]

Yvette Cooper: The Government welcomes the leadership that the Tees Valley Partnership have shown in setting out an ambitious investment programme, including areas in my hon. Friend's constituency through the Coastal Arc proposals. The Government, and the Regional Development Agency ONE North East, will be studying these proposals carefully, with a view to supporting priority projects that deliver sustainable economic development.

Telecommunications Masts

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the Government expects to publish its review of planning regulations for mobile phone masts. [15204]

Yvette Cooper: We are currently commissioning research on the future of telecommunications masts.

We also commissioned a review of the code of best practice on mobile phone network development which will be published shortly. As part of the GPDO review we have also been looking at permitted development rights for mobile phone masts.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations the Government have received from companies holding 3G telecommunications licences relating to planning regulations for mobile phone masts. [15206]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister receives many representations on matters relating to the telecommunications industry. The information about such representations is not readily available in the breakdown requested and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Telephone Inquiries

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what facilities his Department has to deal with telephone inquiries in *(a)* Welsh, *(b)* Scots Gaelic and *(c)* Irish Gaelic. [14706]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no formal requirement for its switchboard staff to be able to converse with callers in any language other than English. However, Welsh is spoken, amongst other languages, by a member of the switchboard team. This is in line with the ODPM Welsh language scheme. There is no provision for Scots Gaelic and Irish Gaelic currently amongst switchboard staff.

The ODPM has a contract in place for interpretation and translation services and should the need arise regularly this contract could be used to provide support to particular ODPM staff in their handling of calls, or the requirement could be added to the contract for switchboard services.

Thurrock Urban Development Corporation

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will ensure that notice is given to the hon. Member for Thurrock of the day that the Order making the Thurrock Urban Development Corporation the local planning authority for strategic development is to be laid before Parliament should this occur during the summer adjournment. [15392]

Yvette Cooper: I wrote to my hon. Friend the Member for Thurrock on 21 September to inform him that we have laid in the House an Order making the Thurrock Development Corporation the local planning authority for applications relevant to its purpose from 12 October 2005.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 20 July 2005 to questions 12498–501 and 12507, what office space area has been sought to accommodate the Thurrock Development Corporation Offices; if he will list vacant offices that were investigated as possible accommodation prior to the selection of Gateway House, Purfleet; and if he will make a statement. [15700]

Yvette Cooper: The Corporation has leased 9,745 sq ft (gross) floor space at Gateway House, Purfleet, Essex.

The Corporation appointed professional consultants to undertake an extensive property search of the Thurrock area in order to identify and secure suitable office accommodation. They undertook a comprehensive value for money business appraisal as part of the process, prior to Gateway House being signed-off by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 20 July 2005 to questions 12498, 12499, 12500, 12501 and 12507, where the strategic plans referred to in the reply are available for inspection; when they were made available; and if he will make a statement. [15701]

Yvette Cooper: The Corporation is currently in the process of finalising their Regeneration Framework for Thurrock. As part of the Framework's preparation they, together with their consultants EDAW, held two major stakeholder events in October and November 2004. In addition to these events, they have spent considerable time discussing options/regeneration themes with key partners.

The Spatial Plan for Thurrock is currently in the making. This will involve extensive consultation (and a rigorous Strategic Environmental Assessment) the timetable for which is currently being prepared.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 20 July 2005 to questions 12498–501 and 12507, on what date the interviewing and selection procedure for the appointment of the Corporation's chief executive was completed; on what date the offer of appointment was made to the chief executive; and if he will make a statement. [15702]

Yvette Cooper: Short list interviews for the selection of the chief executive took place on Wednesday 4 August 2004. Niall Lindsay's appointment was approved by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on 31 August 2004, formal offer of appointment was despatched on 23 September 2004. He took up his post on 18 October 2004.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 20 July 2005 to questions 12498–501 and 12507, which *(a)* local and *(b)* regional partners have been involved in the preparation of a broad programme of capital interventions; what is meant by this term; and if he will make a statement. [15703]

Yvette Cooper: This term is used to describe the corporation's evolving capital programme for 2005–06. Projects under development relate to the corporation's strategic aims and objectives and the themes identified

within the regeneration framework. In future years, projects will also link to the corporation's spatial plan and area master plans.

2005–06 projects are being developed in partnership with Thurrock borough council, Thurrock primary care trust, local community and voluntary groups and the East of England development agency.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 20 July 2005 to questions 12498–501 and 12507, when he expects the Corporation's second capital project to be announced; and if he will make a statement. [15704]

Yvette Cooper: The timing of future investment in projects is dependent upon the successful value for money evaluation and appraisal of projects as these come forward.

Timber

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his Department's procurement policy includes timber used on and in the construction of departmental building projects; and if he will make a statement. [15950]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Contracts where the use of timber and timber based products is anticipated, contain clauses that require the supplier to actively seek legally sourced and sustainable timber and to supply physical evidence that supports this. Furthermore the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister currently has the use of framework contracts for the purchase of furniture, which are subject to supply chain audits by officials.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is presently co-operating with the Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs and other Government Departments in the creation of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber (CPET), and has agreed to provide funding to support the initiative.

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the refurbishment projects in his Department that *(a)* are in progress and *(b)* will start in the next six months; what action is being taken to ensure that timber for these projects is procured from legal and sustainable sources; and whether guidance will be issued to contractors on each of these projects to ensure that the timber used on site during refurbishment also comes from legal and sustainable sources. [15951]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister presently has the following refurbishment projects:

	Project
(a) In progress	
(i) In the office	Eland House, London—space planning/reorganisation project on the fifth, eighth and ninth floors. Allington Towers, London—space planning and DDA works Burlington House, London—External repairs to a Grade 2* listed building London HQ buildings—Disability access works London HQ buildings—Replacement of fire alarm systems
(ii) In each agency of the office	QEII Conference Centre, London—Replacement of air handling units
(b) Will start in the next six months	
(i) In the office	Eland House, London—space planning/reorganisation project, (subject to funding)
(ii) In each agency of the office	None

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has defined refurbishment projects to be upgrading and efficiency projects exceeding £100,000.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and its agencies are committed to the Government Policy on the purchase of Legal and Sustainable forested wood and this is fully supported in our Greening Operations Policy Statement.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has reviewed its procurement terms and conditions in line with recent guidance concerning environmental and sustainability issues and is providing awareness and training for staff. Contracts where the use of timber and timber based products is anticipated, contain clauses that require the supplier to actively seek legally sourced and sustainable timber and to supply physical evidence that supports this.

Procurement of timber and timber based products has been included within the certificated and independently audited ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems which the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has developed to manage our response to the "Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate".

This answer does not include the buildings occupied by Government offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans his Department has to fund the maintenance of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [15952]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I refer the hon. Member to the answer by my hon. Friend the Minister for Climate Change and the Environment on 10 October 2005 (15728).

Video Conferencing

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many video conferencing units are installed in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each agency of the Department; what percentage of offices have these facilities in each case; and what plans there are to increase the number of such units. [16149]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information requested is as follows:

(a) The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has 14 video conferencing units installed with at least one in each of the 11 buildings occupied by its staff. One of these units is managed by another Government Department;

(b) The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's agencies have four video conferencing units installed, with units in each of its three occupancies. One of these units is managed by another Government Department;

100 per cent. of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's occupancies have access to video conferencing facilities.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and its agencies regularly review the requirement for video conferencing equipment, with each proposal being considered on a value for money basis. There are presently no plans to increase the number of units further.

This answer does not include the buildings occupied by Government offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Chess

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on official recognition of chess as a sport. [15892]

Mr. Caborn: Chess is not currently recognised as a sport. The unanimous support of all four national Sports Councils and UK Sport is required in order for a sport or its governing body to receive official recognition.

The criteria that the Sports Councils use to decide whether an activity should be recognised as a sport are derived from their Royal Charters, and ultimately from the Physical Training and Recreation Act 1937. Legal advice has stated that chess does not fall within the meaning of the word "sport" for the purposes of the Royal Charter, or the meaning of "physical training and recreation" in the Act. Recognition of chess would therefore require amendments to the Act.

Sport is now a devolved matter, so a change in the current position would require the unanimous support of both the Devolved Administrations (DAs) and the Sports Councils, before any progress could be made. It would be necessary to put a case to the DAs and the Sports Councils for legislative change that would include chess, and if necessary other "mind games", within the criteria for recognition as a sport. The case put forward must be able to convince them that chess provides the same benefits to the public, such as improved health and fitness, as recognised sports, in order to merit equal status and the financial support that comes with it.

Commemorations

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list anniversaries for which her Department has begun planning commemorations for *(a)* 2006, *(b)* 2007, *(c)* 2008, *(d)* 2009 and *(e)* 2010. [16707]

Mr. Lammy: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is responsible on behalf of the Cabinet for the arrangements for the annual Remembrance day ceremony at the Cenotaph. As, Minister for Culture I am working with Paul Goggins, Minister for Race Equality in the Home Office, to explore the most appropriate role for the Government in the bicentenary celebrations to mark the abolition of slave trade in 2007.

Consultation Papers

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the consultation papers her Department has published since 1997. [15985]

Mr. Lammy: At the 26 July 2005 my Department has published the following consultations, full copies of which can be found on our website:

www.culture.gov.uk

	Title
2005	Revisions to Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings: Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 Consultation Paper
	A Giving Culture: Getting the Best out of the Relationship Between the Voluntary and Community Sector and DCMS
	Understanding the Future: Museums and the 21st Century
	Review of the BBC's Royal Charter, 'A Strong BBC, Independent of Government' 2004
2004	Consultation on Repeal of Section 5 of the Public Statues (Metropolis) Act 1854
	Public Library Service Standard Consultation
	Marine Historic Environment Consultation Paper
	Ecclesiastical Exemption Consultation Paper
	Consultation for the Independent Review of the BBC's Digital TV and Radio Services
	S4C Independent Review/Adolgiad S4C
	Draft Community Radio Order
	National Lottery Licensing
	Choosing Health? Choosing Activity
	Consultation on the Scope and Implementation of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 in Relation to Sports Coaches
	Establishing the Legal Deposit Advisory Panel
	Fee Levels to be Established by Regulation Under the Licensing Act 2003
	UNESCO Consultation on the Draft Convention on the Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Contents and Artistic Expressions
	Consultation on Draft Regulations and Order to be Made under the Licensing Act 2003
	The Protection of Minor and Human Dignity in the Media, and Rights of Reply
	European Commission's Proposal for the Future Culture Programme 2007–13
	Care of Historic Human Remains Consultation
	Party Political Broadcasting Consultation Paper

	Title
	Regional Devolution Consultation Paper
	New EU Media Programme 2007–13 Consultation
	Culture at the Heart of Regeneration
	Government Action Plan—Common Commencement Date Consultation
2003	Review of the BBC's Royal Charter
	Draft Gambling Bill Consultation
	Carriage of BBC Digital Channels on NTL'S Analogue Network
	Historic Environment Records: Benchmarks for Good Practice
	Consultation for the Independent Review of BBC Online
	Ships for the Nation—Consultation on Government Policy for the Preservation of Historic Ships
	Protecting Our Historic Environment: Making the System Work Better
	Museum of London—Regulatory Reform Order Consultation Paper
	Tourism Statistics Review
	Export Controls on Objects of Cultural Interest—Consultation on a Draft Order to be Made under the Export Control Act 2002
	National Lottery Decisions Document
2002	People and Places: Social Inclusion Policy for the Built and Historic Environment
	Consultation on Children's Play Review
	Proposed Review of Some of the UK Export Licensing Categories
	Review of Lottery Funding
	Review of Lottery Licensing and Regulation
	Consultation on BBC Application for Digital Curriculum Service)
	Changes to Licensing Hours During all Future New Year's Eves—Amending the Regulatory Reform (Special Occasions Licensing
	Consultation Paper on Prize Competitions
2001	English Heritage Quinquennial Review: Stage
	Review of the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester
	Review of the National Maritime Museum
	Review of the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art
	Review of the Public Lending Right
	Consultation on Media Ownership Rules
	Responses to the Government Consultation on BBC New Digital Services Proposals
	Working Group on Human Remains—Submissions Invitation
	Review of the Museum of London, Geffrey Museum and Horniman Museum
	Review of the National Museum of Science and Industry
	BBC Application to Launch BBC3
	Gaming Machines: Methods of Payment
	Consultation on Licensing Hours for New Year's Eve 2001 and during Her Majesty's Golden Jubilee in June 2002
	Review of the National Gallery and National Portrait Gallery 2000
2000	Quinquennial Review of the Historical Manuscripts Commission: Stage One
	Promoting Social Inclusion Through Archives
	A Consultation Paper on the Proposed Abolition of the Horserace Betting Levy Board and the Licensing of Racecourse Betting and Pool Betting on Horseracing
	New Opportunities from the Lottery Consultation Paper (in two parts)
	British Library Review: Prior Options Report
	Comprehensive and Efficient—Standards for Modern Public Libraries
	Government Response to All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education 1999
1999	Libraries and the Regional—A Discussion Paper
	Consultation Paper on Changes to the Public Lending Right Scheme
	Implementing the Television Without Frontiers Directive: Consultation Paper
	Regulating Communications: The Way Ahead Results of the Consultation on the Convergence Green Paper
	Consultation Paper on Proposed Structure of Regional Cultural Consortia
	Guidance for Local Authorities on Local Cultural Strategies: Consultation Draft
1998	Consultation on Possible Relaxation to Statutory Restrictions on Participation in Bodies Corporate in Possession of Licence to Provide Local Radio Multiplex Services
	Consultation on Proposed Revision to the Statutory Digital Terrestrial Programme Service Points System
	Consultation about a Sports Ground Safety Authority to Succeed the Football Licensing Authority
	UNESCO: World Heritage Sites—A Consultation Paper on a New United Kingdom Tentative List of Future Nominations
	The Comprehensive Spending Review: A New Approach to Investment in Culture
	Tourism: Towards Sustainability—A Consultation Paper on Sustainable Tourism in the UK
	Television: The Digital Future—A Consultation Document
1997	Access to Museums and Galleries: Consultation Paper on Draft Code of Practice
	Artsmark: A Consultation Paper
	Legal Deposit of Publications: A Consultation Paper
	The People's Lottery

Contractors

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list contractors based in other EU member states that are providing services to her Department. [15456]

Mr. Lammy: DCMS has only one contractor from other EU member states currently providing services and that is our IT service provider—Atos Origin—a French company.

Creative Partnerships

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much has been spent on Creative Partnerships in each year since their creation. [15997]

Mr. Lammy: The table shows Government spending on Creative Partnerships in each year since 2001–02.

£ million

	Spending
2001–02	0.24
2002–03	5.8
2003–04	23.7
2004–05	27.8

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the beneficiaries of the Creative Partnership programme, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [16118]

Mr. Lammy: To date (26 July 2005), the Creative Partnerships programme has provided over 318,000 opportunities for children and young people to engage in sustained work with artists and other creative professionals. I am arranging for a list of schools that have directly benefited from the programme, broken down by parliamentary constituency to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Cultural Connections Website

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the purpose is of the Cultural Connections website; and if she will make a statement. [15980]

Mr. Lammy: The Cultural Connections website is a domain within the Improvement and Development Agency's Knowledge website. It is a resource providing good practice information for local government in relation to cultural and leisure services (for policy and decision makers as well as practitioners). It provides a focus for debate about performance and improvement.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people work on the Cultural Connections website. [15989]

Mr. Lammy: The Cultural Connections website is managed within DCMS, using 20 per cent. of one member of staff and 5 per cent. of another member of staff at 26 July 2005. The technical maintenance of the site is carried out by the Improvement & Development Agency at a cost of £5,000 per annum.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many hits the Cultural Connections website has had in each month since its creation. [15993]

Mr. Lammy: The Cultural Connections website has had the following hits each month since it was created in October 2004:

	Number
2004	
October	1,684
November	1,397
December	208
2005	
January	[1]n/a
February	906
March	662
April	704
May	826
June	731

[1] All figures provided by Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA); they are unable to supply a figure for January due to a change in their statistical platform.

The Cultural Connections website is currently being restructured, and will be relaunched in September 2005.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much the Cultural Connections website has cost in each month since its creation. [15994]

Mr. Lammy: The Cultural Connections website is a domain on the Improvement and Development Agency's Knowledge website. The domain was built at a cost of £10,000 in 2004 and has a maintenance cost of £417 per month (£5,000 per annum).

Culture Online

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much has been spent on Culture Online in each year since its creation. [15976]

Mr. Lammy: The following table shows annual departmental expenditure on Culture Online.

£

Financial year	*Amount*
2000–01	640,382.21
2001–02	1,019,236.22
2002–03	265,379.95
2003–04	1,439,034.38
2004–05	3,900,152.73
2005–06 spend to date	1,876,137.29

Culture Online (COL) is an innovative initiative to increase access to, and participation in, arts and culture. It brings together cultural organisations with cutting-edge technical providers to create projects that delight adults and children of all ages and backgrounds. Eighteen projects have been commissioned so far. As the programme has developed, COL has attracted an increasing amount of public recognition, awards and nominations. The projects have won three BAFTA Interactives, one Webby, three Newspaper Society awards and an Association of Online Publishers award;

two projects have been nominated for British Interactive Media Association awards. COL was also cited as a best practice case study in the NAO's "Managing Risks to Improve Public Services" report, published last year.

Digital Television

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) how many households do not have access to digital television in *(a)* the constituency of Bury St. Edmunds, *(b)* Suffolk, *(c)* Norfolk, *(d)* Essex and *(e)* Cambridgeshire; [15130]

(2) what steps are being taken to widen access to Freeview in *(a)* Suffolk and *(b)* the constituency of Bury St. Edmunds. [15132]

James Purnell: Digital Switchover will enable coverage of Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) to reach the same level as that of the current analogue signals.

The vast majority of households in the areas mentioned above can, with the appropriate equipment, receive digital television services via at least one of digital satellite, digital terrestrial and cable.

Specifically, all of the main transmitters serving East Anglia: Tacolneston (Norwich), Sudbury, and Sandy Heath (Bedford), broadcast the full range of DTT—and hence Freeview—services. However, there are some restrictions due to spectrum overcrowding and proximity to the continent.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the schedule is for the switchover to digital transmission in each region. [15162]

James Purnell: The position as of 26 July, is set out in the written ministerial statement made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State to the House, on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 112–113WS.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of the number of households that will not be able to receive a digital television signal after the analogue switchoff, broken down by parliamentary constituency; and if she will make a statement. [15752]

James Purnell: Digital terrestrial coverage at switchover will match existing analogue coverage—around 98.5 per cent. of households.

While the vast majority of households not currently covered by analogue services can already receive digital television via satellite, cable or DSL, there are still a few areas in which reception is very poor. Therefore, we are considering with Ofcom how to extend further the reach of digital television.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will take steps to ensure that provision is made to help blind and partially-sighted people during digital switchover with *(a)* installation and aerial adjustments, *(b)* financing of accessible set-up boxes and *(c)* free telephone advice on the options they have, including advice on the availability of audio description; and if she will make a statement. [15947]

James Purnell: As stated in our Manifesto, we are committed to achieving digital switchover between 2008 and 2012 ensuring universal access to high-quality, free-to-view and subscription digital TV. The Government will confirm the region-by-region timetable once it is clear that the interests of elderly people and other vulnerable groups are protected. We recognise that there will be some people who need assistance to understand, install and use digital television equipment.

As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State said in her Written Ministerial Statement of 21 July 2005, she expects to make a further announcement this autumn, and will report further progress to the House as appropriate.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she will announce the regional targets for digital terrestrial television coverage. [16010]

James Purnell: The figures for predicted coverage for digital terrestrial television (DTT), at digital switchover, were set out by Ofcom in their announcement made on 1 June. We expect detailed coverage information to be made available once the timetable for switchover has been confirmed.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what provisions have been made for households in Bedfordshire that will be unable to receive a digital signal by 2008; and if she will make a statement. [16624]

James Purnell: The vast majority of households in Bedfordshire can, with the appropriate equipment, receive digital television services via at least one of digital satellite, digital terrestrial and cable.

The Secretary of State confirmed the regional timetable in her statement of 15 September 2005. Digital switchover will take place in Bedfordshire in 2011; it will enable coverage of digital terrestrial television to reach the same level as that of the current analogue signals.

Dollis Hill House

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what *(a)* public and *(b)* Lottery funds have been made available for the restoration of Dollis Hill House; what assessment she has made of the historical and cultural significance of the building; and if she will make a statement. [15820]

Mr. Lammy: In March 2004, English Heritage offered a grant of £11,750 towards the cost of a feasibility study and conservation report on Dollis Hill House, but to date (25 August) no Lottery funds have been made available for its restoration. An assessment of the house was made by English Heritage, and it was awarded a Grade II listing on 23 January 1974 mainly on historic grounds.

Film Funding

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list films which have been made with public funding assistance since 1997. [16842]

James Purnell: My Department has contacted a number of organisations that have provided public funding assistance for film since 1997 to request the information required, and I will arrange for the complete list to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses in due course.

Freedom of Information Act

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many Freedom of Information Act 2000 requests have been answered by the Department; and in how many cases *(a)* information was wholly exempted, *(b)* information was partly exempted and *(c)* the requests were answered in full. [14967]

Mr. Caborn: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my right hon. and learned Friend the Minister of State for Constitutional Affairs on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2248W.

London Olympic Games

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the implications of the events of 7 July for London's hosting of the Olympic Games in 2012; and if she will make a statement. [16021]

Tessa Jowell: The security plans for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games are based on well established security procedures and protocols for policing major events in the UK. We will of course keep these plans under close review in the lead up to 2012 based on the latest security assessments and advice from the security services and the Metropolitan police.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of the effects on costs of security for the 2012 Olympics of the events in London on 7 July; and if she will make a statement. [16022]

Tessa Jowell: The total planned security budget for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games is £213 million. This budget is based on well established security procedures and protocols for policing major events in the UK. We will keep these plans under close review in the lead up to 2012.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what security is planned for the 2012 London Olympics; and if she will make a statement. [16112]

Tessa Jowell: The security plans for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games are based on well established security procedures and protocols for major events in the UK.

The Organising Committee for the Games will have its own Security Directorate, responsible for overseeing an integrated, approach to safety and security. This Security Directorate will be monitored and overseen by the Olympic Security Committee, chaired by the Home Secretary with key members from the security services (including the Commissioner of the MPS).

We will keep our security plans under close review in the lead up to 2012 based on the latest assessments and advice from the security services and Metropolitan police.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received regarding the opportunities for Bedfordshire to play a role in the 2012 London Olympic games; and if she will make a statement. [16633]

Mr. Caborn: Bedfordshire is part of the East of England Working Group for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games. Councillor Lynne Faulkner represents Bedfordshire on that regional working group supporting the wider work the 2012 Nations and Regions Group are undertaking to ensure the whole country is involved in, and benefits from, the games in 2012.

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what measures are planned to provide benefits from the 2012 Olympics for *(a)* hoteliers, *(b)* businesses and *(c)* residents of areas outside East London, with particular reference to Hemel Hempstead constituency. [16663]

Mr. Caborn: We expect there to be significant social, sporting and economic benefits for the whole of the UK as a result of the Olympic and Paralympic games in 2012. There will be billions of pounds worth of contracts on offer to UK companies, and the games provides a unique opportunity to showcase the best of UK business on a global stage. The London games will also result in increased numbers of visitors to the UK in 2012 and offers the opportunity to further raise the profile of the UK as a tourist destination with resulting benefits for the UK hotel trade.

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what contingency plans her Department has for overspend on the Olympic games. [13252]

Tessa Jowell: London's bid underwent rigorous assessment by the International Olympic Committee, Treasury and the Office of Government Commerce. The Government remain committed to ensuring the 2012 games are delivered on time and on budget.

In the unlikely event of an overspend occurring in staging the Olympic and Paralympics games the responsibility will be discharged through an appropriate sharing arrangement to be agreed between Government, the Mayor of London and the National Lottery. The details of the funding arrangements are set out in Command Paper CM5867 laid before the House in June 2003.

Management Consultants

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much her Department has spent on management consultants in each year since 1997. [15986]

Mr. Lammy: The cost to the Department of using management consultants in each year since 1997 is shown in the following table.

Financial Year	*£*
1997–98	113,527.53
1998–99	27,289.12
1999–2000	71,106.30
2000–01	100,089.26
2001–02	90,407.30
2002–03	107,299.50
2003–04	10,170.94
2004–05	21,067.25
2005–06 (Spend to date at 22 July 2005)	4,500.00

The Department uses management consultants for a wide variety of tasks, in particular where specialist skills and expertise is required to contribute to policy making and improving the Department's effectiveness. Contracts are awarded in open competition according to EU procurement Regulations, based on best value for money.

Museum Funding

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which museums receive public funding, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [15988]

Mr. Lammy: I fund the following museums and galleries:

Museum	*Parliamentary Constituency*
British Museum	Holborn and St. Pancras
Design Museum	North Southwark and Bermondsey
Geffrye Museum	Hackney South and Shoreditch
Horniman Museum	Lewisham West
Imperial War Museum (IWM), branches:	
Churchill Museum and Cabinet War Rooms	Cities of London and Westminster
HMS Belfast	North Southwark and Bermondsey
IWMDuxford	Cambridgeshire South
Lambeth Road, London	Southwark North and Bermondsey
Imperial War Museum North	Stretford and Urmston
Museum of London, branches:	
Museum of London	Cities of London and Westminster
Museum in Docklands	Poplar and Canning Town
Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester	Manchester Central
National Coal Mining Museum in England	Wakefield
National Football Museum	Preston
National Gallery	Cities of London and Westminster
National Maritime Museum	Greenwich and Woolwich
National Museum of Science and Industry, branches:	
Locomotion, Shildon	Sedgefield/Bishop Auckland
National Museum of Photography, Film and Television	Bradford West
National Railway Museum, York	City of York
NMSI Wroughton	Swindon South
Science Museum London	Kensington and Chelsea
National Museums Liverpool:	
Conservation Centre	Liverpool Riverside
Customs and Excise National Museum	Liverpool Riverside
Lady Lever Art Gallery	Wirral South
Merseyside Maritime Museum	Liverpool Riverside
Museum of Liverpool Life	Liverpool Riverside
Sudley House	Liverpool Riverside
Walker Art Gallery	Liverpool Riverside
World Museum Liverpool	Liverpool Riverside
National Portrait Gallery	Cities of London and Westminster
Natural History Museum, branches:	
South Kensington	Kensington and Chelsea
Walter Rothschild Zoological Museum, Tring	South West Hertfordshire
Peoples History Museum	Manchester Central
Royal Armouries, branches:	
Leeds	Leeds Central
Fort Nelson	Winchester
Tower of London	Bethnal Green and Bow
Sir John Soane's Museum	Holborn and St. Pancras
Tate Gallery, branches:	
Tate Britain	Cities of London and Westminster
Tate Liverpool	Liverpool Riverside
Tate Modern	North Southwark and Bermondsey
Tate St. Ives	St. Ives

Museum	Parliamentary Constituency
Tyne and Wear Museums, branches:	
Arbeia Roman Fort and Museum	South Shields
Discovery Museum	Tyne Bridge
Laing Art Gallery	Newcastle upon Tyne Central
Monkwearmouth Station Museum	—
Segedunum Roman Fort and Museum	Newcastle upon Tyne East and Wallsend
Shipley Art Gallery	Tyne Bridge
South Sheilds Museum	South Shields
Stephenson Railway Museum	Tynemouth
Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens	Sunderland South Sunderland North
Victoria and Albert Museum, branches:	
Museum of Childhood	Bethnal Green and Bow
South Kensington	Kensington and Chelsea
Theatre Museum	Cities of London and Westminster
Wallace Collection	Cities of London and Westminster

Note:
The funding goes to the main institution and is redistributed by each institution to its branches.

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Defence funds the following museums in England:

Museum	Parliamentary Constituency
Fleet Air Arm Museum, Yeovilton	Somerton and Frome
National Army Museum, Chelsea	Kensington and Chelsea
Royal Air Force Museum (RAFM), branches:	
RAF M, Hendon	Hendon
RAFMt Cosford	The Wrekin
Royal Marines Museum, Eastney	Portsmouth South
Royal Naval Museum Portsmouth	Portsmouth South
Royal Navy Submarine Museum, Gosport	Gosport

Some museums and galleries in England may also receive funding support from Government for specific projects and programmes, including the DCMS/Wolfson Foundation Museums and Galleries Improvement Scheme and "Renaissance in the Regions". The latter is grant-aided through the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council.

National Lottery

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many and what value of National Lottery grants were allocated within each Westminster constituency in Scotland in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [15741]

Mr. Lammy: The following tables show the number and value of National Lottery grants allocated within each Westminster constituency in Scotland in each year since 1997, up to 5 May 2005, as the constituency boundary changes make it impossible to present like-for-like comparisons.

This list, derived from the Department's Lottery award database, is searchable at www.lottery.culture.gov.uk, which uses information supplied by the Lottery distributors.

Value of awards in each Westminster constituency in Scotland since 1997 up to 5 May 2005

£000

UK constituency	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Aberdeen Central	1,188	799	1,324	2,312	3,651	2,154	5,277	2,281	248
Aberdeen North	554	16	2,774	224	2,534	191	3,116	449	70
Aberdeen South	817	123	134	19	247	48	102	539	29
Airdrie and Shotts	79	325	455	190	559	774	1,240	1,628	25
Angus	230	529	902	306	981	1,962	984	1,033	20
Argyll and Bute	1,431	596	4,856	3,499	4,063	2,738	6,513	1,596	560
Ayr	351	484	1,105	393	2,099	1,411	2,964	314	191
Banff and Buchan	109	1,283	442	347	218	697	1,158	769	46
Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross	630	1,453	1,436	1,665	1,513	2,463	1,247	403	71
Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley	1,849	306	332	762	1,022	536	395	1,631	89
Central Fife	46	64	134	717	1,188	273	474	392	23
Clydebank and Milngavie	106	109	276	663	664	450	609	1,104	27
Clydesdale	850	962	3,578	883	641	2,585	1,363	880	258
Coatbridge and Chryston	90	306	228	1,544	1,272	1,636	3,411	350	38
Cumbernauld and Kilsyth	175	754	652	200	108	1,326	1,803	1,996	48
Cunninghame North	247	1,124	758	2,128	4,680	1,932	1,040	2,886	28
Cunninghame South	111	133	1,306	142	746	987	1,621	1,441	32
Dumbarton	562	2,518	1,115	530	2,098	3,983	2,060	931	67
Dumfries	826	2,541	1,843	534	3,265	1,911	3,516	1,131	1,835
Dundee East	2,654	1,017	377	699	4,097	389	362	589	204
Dundee West	3,039	6,223	1,311	833	2,562	3,387	5,820	3,225	102
Dunfermline East	110	265	2,000	123	1,202	578	206	427	65
Dunfermline West	606	1,658	444	1,566	850	389	269	1,401	46
East Kilbride	4,695	311	90	169	424	407	141	461	22
East Lothian	2,037	863	2,685	707	1,107	529	2,986	1,151	142

Value of awards in each Westminster constituency in Scotland since 1997 up to 5 May 2005

£000

UK constituency	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Eastwood	1,307	345	806	804	1,907	1,989	1,874	1,358	302
Edinburgh Central	6,956	14,868	17,179	6,970	22,950	3,537	24,636	3,346	761
Edinburgh East and Musselburgh	1,257	1,565	2,128	680	1,735	790	958	1,189	251
Edinburgh North and Leith	9,263	5,425	3,110	5,017	4,588	4,964	6,382	1,927	513
Edinburgh Pentlands	2,933	1,113	632	312	1,090	2,272	663	121	39
Edinburgh South	309	2,357	664	478	1,058	1,746	497	2,604	56
Edinburgh West	830	713	2,441	3,788	4,740	77	3,285	160	54
Falkirk East	25	177	1,444	764	1,117	920	1,620	1,628	765
Falkirk West	39	438	793	440	647	1,171	1,310	228	24
Galloway and Upper Nithsdale	525	664	1,039	2,200	1,112	815	1,617	1,100	248
Glasgow Anniesland	469	241	154	121	871	217	542	4,261	59
Glasgow Baillieston	191	304	1,902	162	2,699	1,022	401	470	77
Glasgow Cathcart	340	944	978	242	1,420	1,320	1,148	1,582	22
Glasgow Govan	37,259	615	705	590	977	618	1,140	694	1,427
Glasgow Kelvin	29,772	16,922	9,044	6,351	13,475	28,090	23,688	3,989	17,170
Glasgow Maryhill	34,851	1,905	910	1,350	596	689	2,423	1,617	1,904
Glasgow Pollok	28	1,996	83	66	2,090	28	117	595	52
Glasgow Rutherglen	59	184	268	428	734	2,069	2,719	237	33
Glasgow Shettleston	509	3,863	1,357	2,941	1,642	2,033	1,904	1,281	64
Glasgow Springburn	631	1,037	3,094	73	317	436	2,097	1,524	96
Gordon	802	674	399	628	1,369	619	287	1,723	56
Greenock and Inverclyde	335	71	1,941	617	1,855	2,612	658	594	98
Hamilton North and Bellshill	3,094	1,569	1,321	362	1,496	1,821	3,301	990	805
Hamilton South	86	100	436	268	247	167	465	220	24
Inverness East, Nairn and Lochaber	1,884	1,061	1,800	3,021	5,138	3,402	4,728	3,057	263
Kilmarnock and Loudoun	143	248	2,432	1,846	2,263	609	2,266	694	45
Kirkcaldy	104	1,046	1,352	190	1,102	2,448	4,189	1,322	71
Linlithgow	802	734	347	1,091	1,074	2,305	3,327	1,930	27
Livingston	346	1,166	1,399	108	294	1,128	468	1,544	98
Midlothian	4,144	595	1,331	522	1,073	1,639	1,252	1,459	86
Moray	373	515	2,060	644	1,968	1,068	1,193	640	127
Motherwell and Wishaw	480	888	3,231	283	393	612	353	1,053	15
North East Fife	511	1,708	636	1,759	3,876	868	1,447	479	125
North Tayside	1,572	10,462	1,492	826	1,076	2,101	1,879	338	94
Ochil	683	800	4,497	4,857	3,299	136	1,883	1,132	104
Orkney and Shetland	1,139	1,599	1,373	6,514	2,792	9,410	3,799	1,390	145
Paisley North	59	445	2,138	694	2,779	2,579	3,716	187	45
Paisley South	493	387	62	102	1,983	427	663	266	70
Perth	456	917	1,702	464	991	1,082	2,101	1,615	78
Ross, Skye and Inverness West	2,110	1,881	2,630	2,977	1,143	5,780	4,822	1,724	224
Roxburgh and Berwickshire	304	176	1,707	1,944	912	2,437	1,641	1,799	97
Stirling	896	4,784	2,159	2,221	1,204	953	2,456	1,096	249
Strathkelvin and Bearsden	200	536	920	238	1,358	542	1,467	1,189	80
Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale	536	301	2,662	2,193	3,728	3,753	1,627	384	108
West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine	946	415	533	1,172	1,299	1,025	1,299	230	90
West Renfrewshire	76	680	2,517	604	37	1,705	1,043	1,095	80
Western Isles	5,337	1,161	2,435	1,743	1,013	6,652	3,249	1,749	63

Number of awards in each Westminster constituency in Scotland since 1997 up to 5 May 2005

UK constituency	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Aberdeen Central	19	12	19	18	25	43	53	43	8
Aberdeen North	12	5	15	6	10	13	10	8	3
Aberdeen South	19	8	13	6	5	6	11	18	—
Airdrie and Shotts	31	27	50	37	44	38	33	39	4
Angus	20	25	46	30	36	26	37	34	1
Argyll and Bute	38	52	138	92	75	82	112	111	22
Ayr	21	21	33	32	32	41	25	28	8
Banff and Buchan	19	28	39	28	27	18	38	39	6
Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross	60	59	74	66	38	50	74	68	8
Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley	41	56	67	53	45	49	49	49	8
Central Fife	13	27	28	25	25	22	13	19	2
Clydebank and Milngavie	16	15	24	22	12	20	28	25	6
Clydesdale	43	37	98	70	56	63	64	49	15
Coatbridge and Chryston	26	35	56	39	41	35	29	36	2
Cumbernauld and Kilsyth	11	21	36	17	14	25	49	39	7
Cunninghame North	24	32	69	43	48	45	42	41	3
Cunninghame South	18	30	49	31	29	30	19	27	4
Dumbarton	36	45	58	30	38	34	33	33	6
Dumfries	53	56	50	33	41	45	66	58	7

Number of awards in each Westminster constituency in Scotland since 1997 up to 5 May 2005

UK constituency	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Dundee East	24	12	25	23	20	22	22	31	2
Dundee West	20	26	31	21	45	58	66	60	12
Dunfermline East	26	34	49	28	39	13	20	25	5
Dunfermline West	30	31	34	27	22	21	13	18	4
East Kilbride	43	25	39	26	22	21	26	35	3
East Lothian	21	26	59	29	31	30	50	41	7
Eastwood	18	23	45	24	30	34	37	40	8
Edinburgh Central	60	63	86	65	105	97	229	169	37
Edinburgh East and Musselburgh	16	25	42	26	31	40	41	41	10
Edinburgh North and Leith	46	42	61	57	65	78	192	142	31
Edinburgh Pentlands	28	20	33	24	22	26	34	29	5
Edinburgh South	24	21	21	16	25	33	40	45	4
Edinburgh West	18	18	32	15	26	17	28	33	9
Falkirk East	14	17	48	29	17	14	19	17	3
Falkirk West	14	12	30	16	18	20	17	25	3
Galloway and Upper Nithsdale	69	64	96	72	57	71	64	61	8
Glasgow Anniesland	17	13	19	11	19	18	23	36	5
Glasgow Baillieston	15	9	22	8	11	13	15	19	3
Glasgow Cathcart	15	17	29	16	11	18	30	25	3
Glasgow Govan	25	26	42	42	35	44	39	54	12
Glasgow Kelvin	65	72	85	73	88	149	240	197	64
Glasgow Maryhill	30	19	27	19	16	47	78	70	23
Glasgow Pollok	10	20	27	15	12	9	11	15	1
Glasgow Rutherglen	25	26	40	26	22	21	24	28	4
Glasgow Shettleston	20	21	30	27	29	31	46	46	7
Glasgow Springburn	20	16	31	15	20	24	46	44	12
Gordon	26	28	40	35	39	34	33	44	6
Greenock and Inverclyde	17	13	42	22	29	37	23	32	9
Hamilton North and Bellshill	17	25	25	21	30	35	37	27	3
Hamilton South	30	15	23	24	12	22	20	19	3
Inverness East, Nairn and Lochaber	53	52	78	70	62	60	105	105	14
Kilmarnock and Loudoun	36	35	44	41	36	30	38	21	5
Kirkcaldy	16	20	44	28	30	33	27	31	7
Linlithgow	15	30	54	33	31	28	25	20	2
Livingston	20	39	41	36	29	27	26	33	6
Midlothian	33	35	39	20	24	26	31	38	5
Moray	28	38	65	40	41	41	56	44	7
Motherwell and Wishaw	24	28	52	46	37	24	15	24	2
North East Fife	25	38	49	46	43	50	44	42	17
North Tayside	45	44	63	45	47	38	61	47	8
Ochil	37	40	64	23	34	32	47	48	6
Orkney and Shetland	41	48	66	54	68	60	82	65	10
Paisley North	13	19	22	25	21	21	30	19	9
Paisley South	18	19	34	22	23	22	20	20	5
Perth	25	36	55	39	27	31	40	37	6
Ross, Skye and Inverness West	61	61	92	72	57	83	107	106	24
Roxburgh and Berwickshire	29	23	62	44	29	43	56	73	9
Stirling	33	41	61	53	41	33	72	59	10
Strathkelvin and Bearsden	35	32	49	31	22	22	46	33	5
Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale	32	34	54	43	46	58	59	52	11
West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine	29	34	51	51	33	41	45	43	12
West Renfrewshire	16	26	46	28	12	28	21	29	9
Western Isles	42	34	64	44	40	52	61	59	3

Notting Hill Carnival

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money the Government have spent on the Notting Hill Carnival in each year since 1992. [16113]

Mr. Lammy: My Department sets broad policy objectives for the arts but does not organise or fund directly any cultural or artistic events. This is done through Arts Council England. Arts Council England and its predecessor organisations have funded the Notting Hill Carnival in two ways:

Regular funding for the Notting Hill Carnival Trust up to 2003–04;

Funding for organisations and individuals involved in carnival.

Regular funding to the Notting Hill carnival trust

£

	Funding allocated
1992–93	—
1993–94	65,000
1994–95	65,000
1995–96	65,000
1996–97	65,000
1997–98	65,000
1998–99	65,000
1999–2000	65,000
2000–01	67,600
2001–02	70,304

Regular funding to the Notting Hill carnival trust

£

	Funding allocated
2002–03	[2]140,000
2003–04	[3]170,000

[1] Unavailable.
[2] Of which £60,000 was subsequently withdrawn.
[3] This money was subsequently withdrawn and reinvested in Carnival activities and organisations for 2004–05.

Estimated Notting Hill carnival project funding and funding to other Notting Hill carnival organisations 1993–94 to 2000–01

£

	Estimated funding
1993–94	60,000
1994–95	60,000
1995–96	60,000
1996–97	60,000
1997–98	60,000
1998–99	100,000
1999–2000	160,000
2000–01	200,000

Estimated Notting Hill carnival project funding and funding to other Notting Hill carnival organisations 1993–94 to 2000–01

£

	Project funding	Funding to other regularly funded organisations
2001–02	106,000	186,314
2002–03	120,000	190,366
2003–04	127,000	303,556

40th anniversary of the Carnival:

In 2004–05 the total funding figure was £478,624. This included Lottery funding via Grants for the Arts of £253,624 for activities directly related to the Carnival.

Special anniversary events funding

£

Use	Amount
Raising the profile of carnival arts. Production of a documentary film about artists involved in carnival in London.	50,000
Towards one-off awards for individuals and organisations for costumes and presentations celebrating the anniversary.	55,000
Towards a special 40th anniversary edition of Soca news.	15,000
Towards events including Trafalgar Square launch and showcasing carnival in Black History Month.	40,000
Towards an initiative placing carnival costumes in London's public buildings.	10,000
Total	170,000

24 carnival organisations in London—bands, clubs, costume makers, designers and artists—receive regular funding. In 2004–05 this totalled £413,250.

2005–06:

Due to pending applications for funding, no total figure for 2005–06 is yet available, but to date, £239,890 has been awarded through Lottery Grants for the Arts for individuals and organisations involved in the 2005 Notting Hill Carnival. Please note that further applications for carnival funding are currently pending for 2005–06.

24 regularly funded carnival organisations in London have been allocated a total budget of £545,133 for 2005–06. This includes £55,000 for the Notting Hill Mass Bands Association for the 2005 Grand Carnival Splash at Alexandra Palace.

Opinion Surveys

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the *(a)* subject matter and *(b)* dates were of opinion survey research undertaken by the Department and its agencies in the last 12 months; if she will place copies of the results of each survey in the Library; which companies were used in conducting the research; and how much each was paid. [14816]

Mr. Lammy: There have been six pieces of survey research commissioned by the Department and/or its executive agency which have collected information on opinions.

In some cases, the surveys are not exclusively around opinions, but have a wider function of understanding an aspect of behaviour in relation to a departmental policy area. Surveys included are those which have been completed in the past 12 months. Not all have yet been published, as they may form part of a wider piece of work. Links to reports available on the internet are attached, while hard-copy only reports will be placed in the Library now, or when published.

This list does not include work commissioned by the Department's non- departmental public bodies.

1. Subject: Public Support for the 2012 Olympic Games coming to London.

Dates: July to November 2004

Name of Contractor: 'Economics for the Environment Consultancy' (EFTEC)

Costs: £84,670

This report has not yet been finalised and will be published in due course.

2. Subject: Communal TV systems and digital switchover among social housing stock in the UK.

Dates: Commissioned September 2004

Name of contractor: NOP

Costs: £36,000

The report has been published on-line at: www.digitaltelevision.gov.uk/publications/pub_communaltv_systems.html.

I am arranging for hard copies of the document to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

3. Subject: BBC Charter Review—public attitudes towards the BBC

Dates: January 2005

Name of contractor: Craig Ross Dawson

Costs: £23,700

The report has been published on-line at: www.bbccharterreview.org.uk/RESEARCH/research_qualitative.html.

I am arranging for copies of the document to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

4. Subject: Royal Parks Visitor Surveys

Dates: May to December 2004 (to be repeated in 2005 and 2006)

Name of contractor: Synovate

Costs: £126,000 (over the period 2004–06)

The report is available on request in hard-copy only. I am arranging for copies of the document to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

5. Subject: Public Awareness of Safety Regulations in Public Swimming Pools

Dates: March 2005

Name of contractor: MORI

Costs: £3,850

The report is available on request in hard-copy only. I am arranging for copies of the document to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

6. Subject: Live Music Provision in Small and Medium Sized Venues in England

Dates: June to October 2004

Name of contractor: MORI

Costs: £125,000

The report is published on-line at: www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/85EDEDOB- A8E3–4674–9C99–62C1CC97AFFC/0/livemusicsurvey.pdf.

I am arranging for copies of the document to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Playing Fields

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether it is her policy to end the sale of school and community playing fields. [15979]

Mr. Lammy: The Government are committed to protecting playing fields wherever possible. Recently published statistics show that the legislative changes we have introduced are working. In 2003–04 there was a reduction in the number of playing field losses to non-sporting developments compared with 2002–03 figures and a net overall gain in school and community playing field provision. This is the first year that we can say that more playing fields are being created than lost.

We will continue to explore ways in which the legislation can be tightened further so that even more playing fields can be protected.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many community and school playing fields have been sold in each year since 1997. [15984]

Mr. Lammy: We do not collect information in this format. Since 2001–02 we have collected statistics about planning applications relating to playing field use. Key figures are as follows:

	Total number of planning applications:		*Number of approved applications:*	
	received relating to playing fields use	*considered in year*	*representing a net gain or no change to sporting provision*	*detrimental to playing fields*
2001–02	985	856	804	52
2002–03	1297	955	879	76
2003–04	1413	1081	1029	52

We are committed to improving playing fields and protecting them wherever possible. The legislative changes we have introduced have reduced the loss of school and community playing fields. More playing fields are now being created or improved than are being lost.

Private Finance Projects

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 8 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 583W, on private finance projects, what total value of assets and liabilities for the project is recorded on the Government Balance Sheet; what proportion of assets and liabilities is listed; what the accounting treatment is for assets and liabilities; and whether it is compatible with *(a)* generally accepted accounting practices and *(b)* international financial reporting standards. [15960]

Mr. Lammy: No value is recorded on the Government Balance Sheet.

The accounting treatment complies with FRS5 and treatment reflects guidance, in particular, HM Treasury Private Finance Taskforce's Technical Note No 1—How to Account for PFI Transactions. This complies with all aspects of UK GAAP. We are currently waiting for Treasury guidance on treatment of PFI projects under International Financial Reporting Standards. At present these standards do not apply to these projects.

Public Libraries

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many *(a)* books, *(b)* DVDs, *(c)* video cassettes, *(d)* computer games and *(e)* audio books have been available in library service stock in each year since 1997; how many loans were made of each type of item in each year; and if she will make a statement. [15946]

Mr. Lammy: The information is not held centrally. However, the following table shows the number of books, talking books, video/DVD, and CD-Roms, software, etc. items held by libraries in England, and the number of loans annually in each of these categories, since 1997–98.

Million

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Books[1]	73.91	72.69	70.39	69.47	67.83	66.41	64.76
Loans	407.50	389.06	362.82	342.91	318.34	305.11	289.22
Talking books	1.62	1.65	1.78	1.86	1.87	1.89	2.19

Million

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Loans	11.16	10.68	11.11	11.23	10.78	11.57	11.30
Video/DVD	1.24	1.38	1.48	1.60	1.63	1.87	2.06
Loans	9.92	11.05	11.26	11.89	12.15	14.03	14.43
CD-Roms, software, etc	0.04	0.04	0.06	0.11	0.19	0.13	0.12
Loans	0.59	0.65	0.23	0.64	1.26	0.78	0.52

[1] Lending stock only

Source:

Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy—Public Library Statistics (Actuals)

Library Fines

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much was collected in public library fines in each London borough in each of the last five years. [15816]

Mr. Lammy: This information is not held centrally. However, the table shows the total amount of overdue charges collected by library authorities across inner and outer London for each year between 1997–98 and 2003–04.

	Overdue charges collected (£)
1997–98	818,673
1998–99	846,378
1999–2000	955,407
2000–01	888,044
2001–02	1,031,046
2002–03	918,802
2003–04	946,016

Source:

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy: Annual Public Library Statistics (Actuals).

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much revenue the library service has generated from *(a)* late book returns, *(b)* DVD loans, *(c)* video cassette loans and *(d)* computer game loans in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [15945]

Mr. Lammy: This information is not held centrally. However, the table shows the revenue derived by public libraries in England from overdue charges and the hire of audio and visual items since 1997–98.

£ million

	Overdue charges	*Hire of audio/visual materials*
1997–98	15.54	15.37
1998–99	15.67	16.86
1999–2000	15.44	17.95
2000–01	15.61	18.87
2001–02	14.91	21.01
2002–03	14.27	23.50
2003–04	14.28	24.13

Source:

Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy—Public Library Statistics (Actuals)

Regional Casinos

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will review the number of regional casinos to be developed in the initial pilot scheme. [16605]

Mr. Caborn: The Gambling Act makes provision, initially, for one regional casino. We are proceeding with plans for implementing the Act on that basis.

We do not rule out the possibility of asking Parliament to approve an increase in the number of regional casinos in the future. We will consider any evidence that it is safe and prudent in regulatory terms to increase the number to anything up to eight. Any proposal to increase the number will ultimately be a matter for approval by Parliament, by means of the affirmative resolution procedure.

Regional Cultural Consortiums

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what the role of regional cultural consortiums is in delivering her Department's policies; [15975]

(2) what targets the regional cultural consortiums have been set. [15991]

Mr. Lammy: The role of the regional cultural consortiums is to champion and promote the whole spectrum of cultural and creative interests in each region, including tourism and sport, and to forge links across this spectrum and with other related interests. The consortiums are also responsible for the implementation of regional cultural strategies, and they have a role in central policy making, regional data collection and research.

We have agreed a series of objectives and tasks, rather than specific targets, with each consortium to reflect their role in helping to deliver the Department's priorities at regional level. These are set out in their Funding Agreements with the Department. I am arranging for copies of the Funding Agreements to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the composition of each regional cultural consortium is. [15990]

Mr. Lammy: The board members of the regional cultural consortiums represent a wide range of cultural, creative, sporting and related interests in each region. The chairs of the consortiums are appointed by the Secretary of State. The other board members are appointed by the chairs in consultation with other regional partners. The list of board members of each consortium is available in the sponsored bodies section of the Department's annual report.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the performance of the regional cultural consortiums. [15992]

Mr. Lammy: The regional cultural consortiums are required by their Funding Agreements to submit progress reports to the Department every six months, as well as their annual reports and any other reports we may ask for from time to time.

Officials have recently finished reviewing the consortiums' six monthly reports for the second half of the financial year 2004–05, which are the first such reports the consortiums have submitted since they were re-established as executive NDPBs with limited company status in October 2004. On the basis of those reports and further information received since they were submitted, I am satisfied with the performance of the regional cultural consortiums.

This information is correct at the 26 July 2005.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the annual administrative cost of each regional cultural consortium was in 2004–05. [15995]

Mr. Lammy: The regional cultural consortiums each received an allocation of £200,000 from the Department for the financial year 2004–05. They have each been given an allocation of £215,000 for each of the three years from 2005–06 to 2007–08. The consortiums also receive additional funding and support from their regional partners. Information on the administrative costs of the consortiums will be included in their annual reports and accounts which will be published in the autumn.

Reserve Art Collections

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether works of art in national museums and galleries not on display are covered by government indemnity in the event of loss or accident. [16577]

Mr. Lammy: A work of art which has been loaned to a national museum or gallery by a private individual or an institution not funded by the Exchequer will be covered by the government indemnity scheme whether it is on display or in storage, provided that a government indemnity has been issued in relation to it. However, government indemnities are not issued in respect of works of art which belong to the national museums and galleries. They bear their own risk.

School Sport

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) how many school children took part in some form of school sport in the last period for which figures are available; [15981]

(2) what proportion of school children spend at least two hours a week on high quality physical education and school sport. [15982]

Mr. Lammy: The 2003–04 PE, School Sport and Club Links survey—the first, largest and most comprehensive survey of school sport in England—is the only source of robust data on national participation in school sport.

The survey found that overall, 62 per cent. of pupils in the 6,500 schools taking part spend at least two hours in a typical week on high quality PE and school sport. The results of the survey were published on 29 April 2004 and copies of the report ("The Impact of School Sport Partnerships: The Results of the 2003–04 PE, School Sports and Club Links Survey") have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The results of the 2004–05 survey—in which over 11,000 schools took part—will be published in the autumn.

Physical education is a foundation subject within the National Curriculum. It is compulsory at all Key Stages for all pupils.

Television Licences

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much revenue the fines from unpaid television licences generated in 2004–05; and to which departments the revenue is allocated. [16110]

James Purnell: Information is available only for England, Scotland and Wales, and relates to all offences under the Wireless Telegraphy Acts, most though not all of which involve television licence evasion. In 2003, the latest year for which information is available, fines totalling £9,181,186 were imposed for offences under these Acts. Information is not held centrally on the proportion of fines collected by type of offence. Revenue from fines is remitted to central funds.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many unpaid television licences there were in each year since 1997. [16111]

James Purnell: There are by definition no precise figures for television licence evasion. Evasion is estimated by comparing the estimated number of premises requiring a licence with the number of licences in force. The estimated number of evaders as at the end of March each year since 1997 was:

(millions)

	Estimated number of evaders
1997	2.4
1998	2.2
1999	2.0
2000	1.8
2001	1.7
2002	1.7
2003	1.5
2004	1.4
2005	1.3

The Valletta Convention

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she plans to bring into force the operational guidelines of the European Convention on the Protection of Cultural Heritage 1992 (The Valletta Convention). [16347]

Mr. Lammy: The Valetta Convention 1992, ratified by the UK Government in March 2001, lays out a legal and ethical framework in which all archaeology is to be carried out throughout Europe. It is for each Government to apply the Convention in ways that fit in with national practice and legislation and there are no prescriptive operational guidelines common to all countries.

Current measures in place in the UK already meet the Convention's requirements. These include legislation such as the provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979; policy guidance e.g. Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (PPG16); and organisations such as English Heritage and other state-funded archaeological bodies, county and local authority archaeologists.

English Heritage, Historic Scotland, Cadw, DoE Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man, together with the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers, the Council for British Archaeology and the Institute of Field Archaeologists have been working together on the development of a statement of archaeological principles, which archaeologists will be encouraged to sign up to.

Tourism

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps the Government are taking to encourage and promote tourism in Bedfordshire. [16625]

James Purnell: Tourism in Bedfordshire has benefited from Government-funded marketing activity. In April 2003 my Department established VisitBritain with a new domestic marketing remit for England, and we gave strategic responsibility for tourism development to the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). In respect of Bedfordshire, the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) leads on tourism in partnership with the East of England Tourist Board (EETB). These changes, together with VisitBritain's successful marketing activities in promoting Britain abroad as an attractive tourist destination, benefit all parts of the country, including Bedfordshire.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the effects on tourism in London of the bombings on 7 July 2005; and if she will make a statement. [15118]

James Purnell: The Tourism Industry Emergency Response Group is assessing the effects of the bombings on tourism in London and across the UK. The group was established after the foot and mouth outbreak to co-ordinate work in the public and private sectors following emergencies affecting the UK tourism industry. It includes senior representatives of the travel, hospitality and attractions sectors, as well as my Department, VisitBritain, Visit London, the London Development Agency, and the Tourism Alliance. It met on 8, 13, and 22 July.

At its first meeting, the group commissioned work on the economic effects of the bombings from Oxford Economic Forecasting. The initial results of that work suggested that spending by inbound tourists may fall by 2 per cent. for 2005 as a whole, compared to earlier forecasts for the year. Even so, visitor arrivals and spending were expected to rise by 7 per cent. compared to 2004.

These initial results took no account of the further events of 21 July, and the scope of the work commissioned from Oxford Economic Forecasting has been extended to include the events of 21 July. The initial results of this are expected to be made available to the group on 11 August.

This information is correct at 26 July 2005.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what assessment has been made of the effect that the bomb attacks committed on 7 July have had on London's tourism industry; [16177]

(2) what representations her Department has received from the tourism industry regarding the impact of the 7 July bomb attacks on tourism; [16178]

(3) what steps she has taken to minimise the potential damage to the UK tourism industry of the 7 July bomb attacks. [16180]

James Purnell: I discussed the effects of the bomb attacks on the visitor economy with representatives of the tourism industry, VisitBritain, and Visit London, on 12 July. I have received further representations through the Tourism Industry Emergency Response Group, which was established after the foot and mouth outbreak to co-ordinate work in the public and private sectors following emergencies affecting the UK tourism industry.

The group includes senior representatives of the travel, hospitality and attractions sectors, as well as my Department, VisitBritain, Visit London, the London Development Agency, and the Tourism Alliance. It met on 8, 13 and 22 July. At its first meeting, the group commissioned work on the economic effects of the bombings from Oxford Economic Forecasting. The initial results of that work suggested that spending by inbound tourists may fall by 2 per cent. for 2005 as a whole, compared to earlier forecasts for the year. Even so, visitor arrivals and spending were expected to rise by 7 per cent. compared to 2004.

These initial results took no account of the further events of 21 July, and the scope of the work commissioned from Oxford Economic Forecasting has been extended to include the events of 21 July. The initial results of this are expected to be made available to the group on 11 August.

This information is correct at 26 July 2005.

Travel Costs

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much her Department has spent on airline travel for officials in each year since 1997. [15987]

Mr. Lammy: The table shows departmental expenditure on travel and subsistence in each year since 1997. An analysis by type of expenditure is not recorded on the Department's accounting system and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

All official travel complies with the requirements of the Civil Service Management Code, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

Financial year	£
1997–98	256,166.64
1998–99	252,990.17
1999–2000	362,767.76
2000–01	366,112.06
2001–02	411,227.86
2002–03	479,690.78
2003–04	473,483.49
2004–05	496,177.65
2005–06[1]	171,874.81

[1] Spend to date at 22 July 2005.

Wembley Stadium

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what access Brent residents will have to sporting facilities associated with the Wembley stadium; and if she will make a statement. [15588]

Mr. Lammy: The only sporting facility at the Wembley Stadium will be the playing pitch, which will be used for top national and international events. The residents of Brent will be able to buy tickets for these events through the usual commercial channels.

In terms of sporting benefits to the local community, there are several football industry funded football coaches and sports development officers working in the borough giving sporting opportunities to young people, like Rachel Yankey, an England International and Brent resident.

Looking to the future, the Football Association, through Wembley National Stadium Ltd., has committed to creating a major new charitable trust which will benefit local, regional and national sports initiatives. A percentage of Wembley Stadium's annual turnover will be donated to the new trust.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the adequacy of the transport infrastructure around Wembley Stadium; and if she will make a statement. [15825]

Mr. Lammy: We receive monthly reports and meet regularly with representatives from Wembley National Stadium Ltd. and the London Development Agency to discuss progress towards completion of the transport infrastructure improvements around the Wembley National Stadium.

At July 2005 we have been assured that the work being taken forward is fully in line with the requirements set out for the regeneration of the Wembley area and that it will be completed in time to allow the Stadium to open as planned.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 11 October 2005

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Climate Change

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the climate change programme review will be published; and if she will make a statement. [16534]

Mr. Morley: We are aiming to publish the revised UK Climate Change Programme before the end of the year.

Emissions Trading

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effect of the introduction of the European emission trading scheme on the cost of UK coal; and if she will make a statement. [16536]

Mr. Morley: The cost of supplying UK coal is not directly affected by the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. Emissions trading impacts the costs of downstream industries which use coal as a primary fuel input and which are captured by the scheme. One of the most important users of coal is the electricity generation industry. The final report of an independent study by Ilex Energy Consulting in 2004 on the impact of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme on the price of electricity for consumers across Europe is available on the Department of Trade and Industry's website (www.dti.gov.uk/energy/sepn/euets.shtml)

In July 2005, IPA Energy Consulting were commissioned to conduct a study on the impact of the scheme on investment and pricing within the UK power generation sector. The final report will be published on the Department of Trade and Industry's website in due course.

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on UK participation in greenhouse gas emissions trading. [16841]

Mr. Morley: The UK is participating in two greenhouse gas trading schemes: the national UK Emissions Trading Scheme and the European Union Emissions Trading Scheme.

The UK Emission Trading Scheme has been running since 2002, when 32 companies bid in voluntary emissions reduction targets for a share of Government incentive money. To date, the scheme has achieved emissions reductions of over 12 million tonnes of CO_2. The scheme has proved a valuable experience for participants, brokers, verifiers and Government ahead of EU and international trading.

The EU Emissions Trading Scheme is a cost-effective and efficient way of reducing carbon dioxide emissions. On Tuesday 24 May 2005, the UK National Allocation Plan (NAP) was published, and the UK Registry went live allowing operators to begin trading.

The total number of allowances allocated to industry is based on progress beyond our Kyoto target and towards our national goal of a 20 per cent. cut in CO_2 emissions on 1990 levels by 2010. In the first phase (2005–08), the scheme is set to help reduce carbon dioxide emissions in the UK by around 65 million tonnes carbon dioxide (around 8 per cent.) below projected emissions.

For Phase II of the EU ETS a major UK priority is to address any gaps, anomalies, or competitive distortions that may have arisen during Phase I, and to look at whether there is scope to include further carbon dioxide emissions from existing sectors. Member states share a desire to move towards greater consistency in coverage and implementation across the EU25 in the second phase, and we are working with other member states and the Commission to discuss harmonisation on a range of key issues relating to the shape and scope of the scheme.

Greenhouse Gases

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs by how much greenhouse gas emissions have risen in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [16538]

Mr. Morley: The following table shows UK emissions for the six Kyoto greenhouse gases, carbon dioxide (CO_2) methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), the hydrofluorocarbons (MFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF_6), in million tonnes of carbon equivalent, for each year since 1997. The table also shows the total emissions of the basket of six gases, in million tonnes of carbon equivalent. These figures are taken from the latest UK greenhouse gas inventory.

Million tonnes of carbon equivalent

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
CO_2	153.9	154.5	151.7	152.8	157.4	152.7	156.1
CH_4	16.6	15.7	14.7	13.6	12.8	12.3	11.1
N_2 0	16.6	15.8	12.3	12.2	11.6	11.2	11
HFCs	5.2	4.7	3	2.5	2.7	2.8	2.9
PFCs	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
SF_6	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4
Total	192.9	191.3	182.1	181.8	185	179.5	181.6
Year on year percentage change	—	-0.8	-4.8	-0.2	1.8	-3.0	1.2

Total UK greenhouse gas emissions decreased by 5.9 percent. between 1997 and 2003, relative to 1997. The table indicates year-on-year percentage change (negative values indicate a decrease from the previous year and positive an increase from the previous year).

Hazardous Waste

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reasons there is no exemption from registration with the Environment Agency under the Hazardous Waste Regulations for construction sites that produce less than 200kg of hazardous waste a year. [15084]

Mr. Bradshaw: The purpose of site registration is to enable the Environment Agency to better identify those premises producing hazardous waste to facilitate the appropriate inspection of such premises as required by Article 4(1) of the Hazardous Waste Directive, and is consistent with our risk-based approach to regulation. It is recognised that some premises will in general produce only small amounts of relatively lower risk hazardous wastes such as fluorescent tubes and computer monitors, and they are exempt from the requirement to notify where they produce less than 200kg of hazardous waste per year. These premises include shops, offices, pubs, restaurants and farms as well as any establishments producing household waste. Industrial sites, including construction sites, are outside the scope of the exemption since they may produce higher risk waste such as soil contaminated by asbestos, coal tar or oil (all of which are carcinogenic). Nevertheless, there is provision for mobile service operators—such as painters and decorators—to be able to notify the site from which they operate rather than each site they visit where at each of those sites they produce less than 200kg of hazardous waste.

Kyoto Protocol

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how the Government plans to meet the Kyoto agreement to cut carbon emissions from 1990 levels by 12.5 percent. by 2010; and if she will make a statement. [16537]

Mr. Morley: The Government set out their policy on reducing emissions of the six greenhouse gases covered under the Kyoto Protocol in its publication 'Climate Change: The UK Programme' (CM 4913) in 2000. This publication contains a set of flexible measures covering a range of different sectors—including transport, agriculture, business and households.

The UK remains on course to meet its Kyoto target of a 12.5 percent. reduction on base year levels by 2008–2012. Details of the reductions in greenhouse gas levels achieved so far, the main measures already in place and future options under consideration to achieve further reductions in greenhouse gas levels are contained in the 2004 'Review of the UK Climate Change Programme Consultation Paper' (PB 10372). A revised Climate Change Programme will be published later this year.

Sewers and Drains

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 7 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1672W, on sewers and drains, when the Government intends to publish a decision paper on proposals to transfer ownership of private sewers and lateral drains from property owners to local water companies; and if she will make a statement. [16400]

Mr. Morley: The Government intends to publish a decision later this year, but does not rule out the need to consult further on the scope and form of a potential transfer.

CABINET OFFICE

Business Regulation

25. **Mr. Bellingham:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will take steps to reduce the level of regulation on business. [16808]

Mr. Hutton: Yes. Our proposals for better regulation were set out in the March 2005 Budget.

These reforms will result in year on year reductions in the administrative burdens faced by business and a more proportionate, targeted and risk-based inspection regime.

Lord Birt

26. **Mr. Lancaster:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make a statement on reports written by Lord Birt since his appointment as an adviser to the Prime Minister. [16809]

Mr. Hutton: Lord Birt is the Prime Minister's unpaid Strategy Adviser. He provides the Prime Minister and other Cabinet Ministers with advice on a range of issues. He has contributed to reports in conjunction with the Strategy Unit on London, crime, health, education, transport and drugs.

Better Regulation Executive

Ms Barlow: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make a statement on progress in implementing the recommendations of the Better Regulation Executive report, "Less is More". [16640]

Mr. Hutton: The Government published a formal response to the Better Regulation Task Force (BRTF) report "Less is More" on 18 July 2005, copies of which are available in the Library. Implementation of the recommendations in the BRTF report is on track. For example:

In response to the recommendations about making it easier to remove or amend outdated or unnecessary regulation, the Government have already set out their proposals in a consultation document, "A Bill for Better Regulation", published on 20 July 2005.

On 15 September the Cabinet Office launched a major project to measure and then reduce the amount of paperwork and administration costs that Government regulations impose on British businesses

and charities. This will involve extensive interviews with businesses, charities and voluntary organisations to estimate how much it costs them to comply with Government regulations.

The BRTF also recommended that the Cabinet Office establish "by the end of 2005" a new mechanism for business and other stakeholders to submit regulatory reform proposals to Government. This was launched on 15 September. Details are available at www.betterregulation.gov.uk. Departments and agencies will have 90 working days to respond to such proposals.

Departmental Websites

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list websites that come under his Department's responsibility; and what the *(a)* cost and *(b)* number of visits was for each in the last year for which figures are available. [15769]

Mr. Jim Murphy: A table listing the websites within the Department's responsibility and the costs and number of visits for each, has been placed in the Library.

A website has been determined to be a set of pages under a unique domain name for example, www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk. Costs and traffic for sub-domains and areas within a website for example, www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/regulation, are incorporated within the figures for the main site. A certain number of unique domain names, for example www.chartermark.gov.uk, are just automatic redirectors to the relevant section of another site e.g. www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/chartermark. In such cases, statistics and costs have been included within the main site.

Select Committees

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what changes have been made to the advice for officials attending select committees since 1997. [16806]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Updated guidance for officials attending Select Committees, to take account of changes both in Government and Parliament, was published on 14 July. Copies are available in the Library.

TRANSPORT

Rail Stations (Disability Legislation)

10. **Mr. Khan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether his Department has undertaken an audit of all rail stations to assess their compliance with disability discrimination legislation. [16819]

Ms Buck: I plan to publish a Strategy for Rail Accessibility later this year. This will set out the process for allocating the £370 million "Access for All" fund to improve access to stations for disabled people over the next 10 years. Our aim is to maximise the potential for disabled people to make rail journeys.

Train operating companies have already carried out access assessments for the Strategic Rail Authority as part of preparing their Disabled Persons Protection Policies.

Saltaire Roundabout

11. **Philip Davies:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to ensure that the traffic problems at the Saltaire roundabout are resolved before the road is detrunked. [16820]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency is in discussion with City of Bradford metropolitan district council to address concerns over detrunking the A629/A650 route.

One of the issues being considered is the congestion at Saltaire roundabout. A joint study into the issue has been agreed.

Railway Industry (Subsidies)

12. **Tony Baldry:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans the Government have to change the level of subsidy for the railway industry. [16821]

Mr. Darling: The Government's spending plans for rail until 2008–09 were set out in my statement to Parliament of 10 February.

Rail Services

13. **Hugh Bayley:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to improve integration of rail services between Network Rail and train operating companies. [16822]

Derek Twigg: The changes made by the Railways Act 2005 will ensure that the different parts of the industry work more effectively together—and create the conditions for Network Rail to work more closely with operators. In particular, integrated control offices are being established to improve coordination between Network Rail and operators and ensure trains run more reliably.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will assess capacity on South West trains following the relocation of 30 units by the Strategic Rail Authority to the Northampton line; and if he will make a statement. [16831]

Derek Twigg: Network Rail is currently carrying out a route utilisation strategy (RUS) on the SWT route and will be consulting shortly on their initial findings. The RUS concentrates on maximising the passenger and rolling stock capacity of the route to the available infrastructure. The RUS will feed into and help form the timetable for the re-franchising of South West Trains, targeted for 14 months time in February 2007. The franchise specification will also include the efficient deployment of rolling stock to meet capacity requirements.

19. **Andrew George:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the future of the Penzance to Paddington rail sleeper service. [16828]

Derek Twigg: Bidders are required to include provision for a Paddington to Penzance sleeper in their bids for the new Greater Western franchise. To ensure

value for money, however, bidders have also been asked to cost the service and propose alternative ways of serving the overnight market. A decision on the future of the sleeper will be taken in the light of the bids received.

Transport Costs

14. **Norman Baker:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the percentage change in real terms of the costs of travelling by *(a)* private car, *(b)* bus and *(c)* train has been since 1997. [16823]

Mr. Darling: Between 1997 and 2004 the real cost of motoring declined by 7 per cent., bus and coach fares increased by 11 per cent. and rail fares increased by 4 per cent.

Roads Network (South-east)

15. **Michael Gove:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on investment in the roads network in the south-east. [16824]

Dr. Ladyman: We announced in December 2004 that the south-east region will receive over £950 million over the next three years for investment in transport schemes of local and regional importance, including roads. This funding is in addition to our funding for road schemes of national importance, such as widening the M25.

Road Schemes (Norfolk)

16. **Mr. Bacon:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on major road schemes in Norfolk. [16825]

Dr. Ladyman: We announced in December 2004 a programme of major transport schemes which we propose to take forward in the East of England. These include a number of road improvement schemes that will benefit Norfolk.

Nexus Passenger Transport Executive

17. **Mrs. Hodgson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent representations he has received on the funding of the Nexus Passenger Transport Executive in Tyne and Wear; and if he will make a statement. [16826]

Ms Buck: In July, Nexus delivered to the Secretary of State their 20-year strategy for capital reinvestment in the Tyne and Wear Metro. DfT officials are considering requests by Nexus for a contribution to development costs for the strategy, for continuing revenue support for the Metro, and for the funding of a quality bus corridor scheme.

Regional Airports

18. **Mr. McGovern:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps the Government are taking to support small regional airports. [16827]

Ms Buck: The White Paper "The Future of Air Transport" acknowledged the important role played by regional airports and supported their growth to serve regional and local demand. It recognised that limited public funding may be appropriate to support small airports owned by local authorities and those in Objective 1 and 2 areas, and facilitated the use of Route Development Funds to provide start-up aid for new routes from regional airports.

Crossrail/Thameslink

20. **Mr. Laurence Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the likely impact of Crossrail on links between Gloucestershire and London; and if he will make a statement. [16829]

Derek Twigg: The numbers and speed of current services between Gloucestershire and London are not expected to be affected by Crossrail during normal operation. The Crossrail project includes significant upgrading of the GWML which will cause some disruption, but not out of line with major upgrading work done elsewhere on the national network.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what studies his Department has undertaken on the impact of Crossrail construction on road safety in the Spitalfields area. [15919]

Derek Twigg: The safety of road users, during both the construction and operation of Crossrail, was considered as part of the Crossrail Transport Assessment, which forms part of the Crossrail Environmental Statement published in February 2005.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what health and safety impact studies his Department has undertaken on *(a)* Crossrail and *(b)* Thameslink options. [15916]

Derek Twigg: Cross London Rail Links Limited (CLRLL) has reviewed the health and safety impacts of each element of the Crossrail design and compiled a risk register. This register lists all identified hazards during the construction, operation and maintenance phases of the project and outlines the safety measures envisaged. CLRLL is also carrying out a health impact assessment for the project, which will be published later in the year.

Responsibility for Thameslink 2000 is a matter for Network Rail. Health and safety studies were undertaken by the project team and were presented to the Thameslink 2000 public inquiry in 2000–01.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what environmental impact studies his Department has undertaken on *(a)* Crossrail and *(b)* Thameslink options. [15917]

Derek Twigg: The impacts on the environment arising from the Crossrail project are reported in the Crossrail Environmental Statement (ES) published in February 2005. Additional environmental impact information is provided in the Crossrail Supplementary ES published in May 2005.

Thameslink 2000 is a matter for Network Rail. Thameslink 2000 was subject to a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in 1997 and again in 1999 resulting in the production of an ES in each of those years, accompanied by the appropriate supporting documentation. A further EIA was undertaken in 2004 the results of which were documented in an ES published in June 2004 (ES2004). Additional EIA work was undertaken in 2005 to update parts of ES2004 and

to assess specific potential cumulative effects of concurrent construction of Thameslink 2000 and Crossrail at Farringdon, should this occur. This later work was documented in the Thameslink 2000 ES Addendum 2005. ES2004 and the 2005 Addendum are part of the documentation informing the Thameslink 2000 public inquiry, which re-opened on 6 September 2005.

Departmental Websites

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what websites come under his Department's responsibility; and what the *(a)* cost and *(b)* number of visitors to those sites was in the last year for which figures are available. [16026]

Ms Buck: The following websites are the Department's responsibility and include the Department for Transport (DfT) website, associated DfT websites as well as DfT Agency sites. Figures are provided for the financial year 2004–05.

The 'Number of visitors' information provided refers to the number of unique users who have visited each site. This information is not provided for all sites where statistics software used does not provide such data and is listed as 'Not Available' where relevant.

Website	*Cost for 2004–05 (£)*	*Unique users*
www.dft.gov.uk	290,035	1,302,705
www.cfit.gov.uk	5,608.87	n/a
www.dptac.gov.uk	14,137	n/a
www.highwaycode.gov.uk	4,143.35	n/a
www.utmc.gov.uk	2,340	n/a
www.webtag.org.uk	8,546.75	n/a
www.transportdirect.info	15.5 million	712,058
www.cyclesense.net	0	n/a
www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk	14,237	n/a
www.hedgehogs.gov.uk	0	n/a
www.databases.dft.gov.uk/primary	563	n/a
www.databases.dft.gov.uk/secondary	563	n/a
www.thinkseatbelts.com	1,100	n/a
www.databases.dft.gov.uk/roadsafety	0	n/a
www.databases.dft.gov.uk/schools	0	n/a
www.drugdrive.com	1,050	n/a
www.cyclesmart.org	33,200	n/a
www.mcga.gov.uk	16,717	n/a
www.highways.gov.uk	726,900	804,181
Highways Agency research compendium site	75,478	82,275
Highways Traffic Map	227,176	193,201
www.dvlaregistrations.co.uk	45,566.32	n/a
www.dvla.gov.uk	27,930	4,282,548
www.dvlaonline.gov.uk	62,000	1703
www.dvla.gov.uk/vehiclelicence	2,493,061.64	n/a
www.homezoneschallenge.com	2768.16	n/a
www.dsa.gov.uk	50,000	5,324,743
www.passplus.org.uk	2,000	238,443
www.arrive-alive.info	2,000	16,880
www.ask-what-if.com	2,000	25,579
www.theory-tests.co.uk	5,000	1,240,148
www.vcacarfueldata.org.uk	4,089	n/a
www.vca.gov.uk	4,589	n/a
www.vosa.gov.uk	n/a	112,211

n/a = not available.

Rail Franchises

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the timescale is for key decisions relating to the new South West Trains franchise in 2007. [16830]

Derek Twigg: An Official Journal of the European Union Notice was issued on 22 September inviting Expressions of Interest to run the South Western franchise; responses are due back on 11 November. Those short-listed will be announced in January 2006, and an invitation to tender issued in March 2006. Bids must be returned during June 2006, and it is expected to announce the successful bidder in autumn 2006.

TREASURY

Charities

Mike Penning: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much revenue was raised in taxation on charities in 2004. [16848]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Charities are exempt from tax on most income and gains provided they are applied charitably. Charities are not normally exempt from tax on income and gains derived from non-charitable activities. Tax on income and gains raised from charities in 2004–05 with respect to non-charitable activities, or funds applied to non-charitable purposes amounted to less than £10 million.

HM Revenue and Customs do not collect data on VAT from individual goods and services. A figure for revenue from VAT on charities is therefore unavailable.

Company Tax Reliefs and Subsidies

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of tax reliefs and public subsidies in grants or loans received by each of the top 20 UK companies has been in each year since 1990; and if he will list the main tax reliefs and public subsidies concerned. [16360]

John Healey: Disclosure of the tax reliefs and support for particular companies would breach taxpayer confidentiality.

However, details of the costs of the main tax reliefs can be found in table A3.1 in the Financial Statement and Budget Report 2005, and details on business support can be found in departmental reports.

Crossrail

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment has been made of the effects of Crossrail on London's economy; and if he will make a statement. [15415]

Derek Twigg: I have been asked to reply.

Information on the economic assessment of Crossrail is available on the Crossrail website at www.crossrail.co.uk

Debt Relief

Ann McKechin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) to how many countries he proposes to extend the Government's debt relief programme; [15416]

(2) to which poor countries the Government's current debt relief programmes apply; and how they are structured. [15323]

Andrew George: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much *(a)* bilateral and *(b)* multilateral (i) aid and (ii) debt relief for developing countries he has committed from UK Treasury resources since the G8 summit at Gleneagles. [15561]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The annual departmental report for the Department for International Development (DFID) sets out DFID's current spending plans and reports on outturn expenditure for previous years. Each departmental report's analysis of DFID expenditure covers: bilateral aid expenditure, including all forms of direct assistance; expenditure through multilateral institutions; DFID expenditure in support of the HIPC initiative and the multilateral debt relief initiative, for those years in which these initiatives have been in place.

Reports outline DFID's expenditure plans and do not distinguish between pledges and commitments.

DFID's departmental report was first published in 1999. The Secretary of State for International Development has arranged for copies of the report from 1999 to 2005 to be placed in the Library of the House. Information on DFID expenditure is to be found in: Annex 1, Table 5 of the 1999 and 2000 reports; Annex 2, Table 10 of the 2001 report; Annex 1, Table 4 of the 2002 to 2005 reports.

In the 2004 Spending Review, the Chancellor announced that DFID's budget would increase from £4.5 billion in 2005–06 to £5.0 billion in 2006–07 and to £5.3 billion in 2007–08. The Department has set out its expenditure plans within this framework in its departmental report 2005. For ease of reference, the Department's total planned expenditure on bilateral aid programmes and through multilateral institutions for the period 2005–06 to 2007–08 is set out in Table 1. This excludes the UK's share of the EC aid budget which is set against DFID's budget. It also excludes most UK expenditure on debt relief, although DFID's contribution to the HIPC Trust Fund is included. This is because most of our internationally agreed debt relief is provided on debts held by the Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD). Debt relief that goes beyond what is required by international agreements is funded by DFID. DFID's bilateral and multilateral aid expenditure plans were not changed in light of the G8 Finance Ministers summit in June.

Table 1

£ million

Plans	*Bilateral expenditure*	*Multilateral*
2005–06	2,062	1,085
2006–07	2,111	1,282
2007–08	2,261	1,306

Debt relief

The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative provides qualifying countries with relief and cancellation of debts owed to multilateral institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF, as well as debts to bilateral governments. To date, debt relief worth $56 billion (in nominal terms) has been agreed for 28 countries, other countries are likely to enter the Initiative next year. The World Bank and IMF estimate that the HIPC Initiative has been freeing up around $1 billion a year from debt service payments for the 28 countries that have qualified under HIPC. The UK is the second largest contributor to the HIPC Trust Fund, which assists multilateral institutions with the costs of providing debt relief under HIPC. We pledged a total of $436 million to the Trust Fund ($221 million, plus $88 million of the European Commission contribution in 2000, and a further $95 million, plus $32 million of an EC contribution in 2002). In addition, the UK also contributed US$43 million to assist the International Monetary Fund with its costs of delivering HIPC debt relief. 18 countries have qualified for Completion Point of HIPC (Benin, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Guyana, Ghana, Honduras, Mali, Mauritania, Madagascar, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia). Another 10 have reached Decision Point (Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Malawi, Sierra Leone and Sao Tome and Principe). A further 10 are eligible for debt relief under HIPC once they meet Decision Point criterion (Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo, Cote D'Ivoire, Lao Pdr, Liberia, Myanmar, Somalia, Sudan and Togo). A final list of countries eligible for HIPC under the Sunset Clause will be released early next year.

On bilateral debt, the Government have cancelled the aid debts owed by the poorest countries (not just the HIPCs), worth some £1.2 billion since 1978.

In 1999, the Government agreed to cancel 100 per cent. of bilateral debts owed by HIPC countries to the UK when these countries completed the HIPC process. Since most aid debts had already been cancelled, these were export credit guarantee debts. For HIPC countries, total UK debt written off so far (to August 2005) is around £1.2 billion; this includes traditional Paris Club debt treatment, as well as the application of our 100 per cent. bilateral cancellation policy under the HIPC Initiative.

In 2000, the Government agreed that they would not benefit from debt service payments from HIPC countries, and that any payments received from December 2000 would be held in trust and reimbursed to the country once it had successfully completed the HIPC process.

In 2004, recognising the poorest countries were still having to curtail spending on poverty reduction in order to service their debts, the Government proposed greater relief on debts owed by countries to international institutions. The Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) began on 1 January 2005, under which we committed to pay our share, 10 per cent., of qualifying countries' debt service payments to International Development Association of the World Bank and the African Development Fund. We expect to spend about $46 million on qualifying countries this financial year.

In June 2005, the Finance Ministers of the G8 countries endorsed a proposal to cancel all the remaining debts of Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPCs) to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank and African Development Fund (AfDF). Details are still under discussion, but when agreed by the international community, the deal will be

worth approximately $55 billion in debt stock cancellations for the current 38 HIPCs. Donors will provide approximately $49 billion of this over the next 40 years to IDA and AfDF to compensate for foregone reflows. The cost of debt relief at the IMF ($6.1 billion) will be financed from internal resources, although the donors have committed to provide additional resources if needed to ensure that the IMF's ability to assist poor countries is not diminished. It is estimated that the annual resources freed up by the proposal will be around $1 billion in 2007, rising to around $1.7 billion in 2010—resources that will enable countries to tackle poverty.

The G8's proposal, when agreed, will supersede the MDRI for HIPCs. The precise costs to the UK are yet to finalised, but are likely to be in the region of $6 billion over the whole period of implementation. In addition, the UK will continue to meet its obligations under the MDRI to qualifying non-HIPC countries. This will cover IDA-only, low-income countries with a sufficiently robust public financial management system, the current proxy for this being budget support from the World Bank through a Poverty Reduction Support Credit. The value of this assistance will be $184 million until 2015 for currently eligible countries (Armenia, Mongolia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam), potentially rising to $463 million until 2015 for all potentially eligible countries.

G8 Finance Ministers also reiterated in June their continued commitment to the full implementation and financing of HIPC. The UK already meets and exceeds its commitments under HIPC. Our commitment to HIPC and other bilateral debt cancellation policies continue and were not altered by the G8 Finance Ministers' decisions in June.

Ann McKechin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what measures he will be taking to ensure the implementation of the debt relief agreement concluded at the G8 Gleneagles meeting for the completion point heavily indebted poor countries without further conditionality demands from international financial institutions. [15419]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The UK welcomes the agreement at the recent annual meetings of the World Bank and IMF to the multilateral debt relief proposal. Up to 18 countries that have reached completion point of the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) initiative could benefit immediately, with a further 10 countries benefiting over the next year or two, and an additional 10 countries as they reach completion point. The proposal covers debt to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank and the African Development Fund (AfDF).

All countries receiving relief will have demonstrated their commitment to poverty reduction through completion of the HIPC process. Debt cancellation will be irrevocable—there will be no ongoing conditionality on support. Allocation of additional resources from IDA and the AfDF through their performance based allocation systems will maintain a performance incentive.

Government Debt

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of UK Government debt was raised in sterling; what currencies the remainder was raised in; how much was raised in each; how the exchange risk is managed; and if he will make a statement. [16333]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The following table sets out the gross nominal liabilities of the national loans fund (formerly known as the national debt) broken down by currency as at 25 August 2005.

Gross nominal liabilities of the national loans fund

Currency	*Amount (£ billion)*	*Percentage of total*
Sterling	449.11	99.6
Canadian dollar	0.03	0.0
US dollar	1.79	0.4
Euro	0.001	0.0
Total	[1]450.93	100.0

[1] Figures may not sum due to rounding

UK Government foreign currency borrowing accounts for 0.4 percent. of total borrowing. The majority of this foreign currency borrowing relates to a US dollar bond issued in June 2003. All the money raised from UK Government foreign currency borrowing is used to finance foreign currency assets held in the exchange equalisation account (EEA). Exchange rate risk is managed by either purchasing assets of the same currency as the liabilities with which they are associated or by using foreign currency swaps to match the currency exposure of the assets with the liabilities.

Non-oil Gross Value

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will publish the estimates for each quarter since Q1 1997 of *(a)* actual non-oil gross value added and *(b)* non-oil gross value added if it had grown according to trend, that underpin chart 4.1 of the Treasury publication, Evidence on the UK Economic Cycle. [16335]

John Healey: The trend rate of growth assumed in the 'post-30 June revisions' line of chart 4.1 of the Treasury publication 'Evidence on the UK economic cycle' is the average rate of growth of non-oil gross value added between the estimated on-trend points in 1997H1 and 2001Q3, and the assumed rate of 2¾ percent. a year thereafter. The requested information is as follows:

	Actual non-oil GVA	*Trend non-oil GVA as assumed in chart 4.1*
1997		
Q1	195079	195126
Q2	196273	196434
Q3	197714	197957
Q4	199984	199493
1998		
Q1	201500	201040
Q2	202783	202600
Q3	204932	204172
Q4	206770	205756

	Actual non-oil GVA	Trend non-oil GVA as assumed in chart 4.1
1999		
Q1	207704	207352
Q2	208916	208960
Q3	210816	210581
Q4	213520	212215
2000		
Q1	216553	213861
Q2	218297	215520
Q3	220323	217192
Q4	221337	218877
2001		
Q1	222860	220575
Q2	223471	222286
Q3	224010	224010
Q4	225004	225534
2002		
Q1	226058	227069
Q2	226797	228615
Q3	228729	230170
Q4	229405	231737
2003		
Q1	231004	233314
Q2	232316	234901
Q3	234758	236500
Q4	237208	238109
2004		
Q1	239413	239730
Q2	241085	241361
Q3	242175	243004
Q4	243574	244657
2005		
Q1	244539	246322

Taxation

Mr. Love: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of gross salary was paid in tax for each decile of income in each year from 1979; and if he will make a statement. [10411]

Dawn Primarolo: The information for taxpaying employees is in the table. Information for earlier years is not readily available.

Percentage of gross salary paid in tax by each decile

Deciles ranked by salary	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Bottom	6	5	5	5	6
2nd	8	6	6	6	6
3rd	11	10	10	10	10
4th	13	12	12	12	12
5th	15	14	13	13	13
6th	16	15	15	15	15
7th	17	16	16	16	16
8th	17	17	16	16	16
9th	18	18	18	18	18
Top	29	28	28	28	28
Average	19	19	19	19	18

Estimates are based on the Survey of Personal Incomes (SPI) and 2002–03 is the latest survey year.

The survey is based on information held by the HM Revenue and Customs tax offices on persons who are liable to UK tax.

These estimates exclude information on working families' tax credits (now replaced by working tax credit) and employees with earnings below the tax threshold—both of which enhance the progressivity of the tax system.

Tsunami Appeal

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much tax the Government have received from the tsunami appeal *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by individual taxes. [16858]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Charities do not pay tax on donations they receive, but many fund-raising events for the tsunami appeal were subject to VAT.

In January the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that the Treasury would make a special contribution to the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) to match the VAT collected on fund-raising events and sales. In August, having collected information on the amount of VAT raised on tsunami related fundraising events, the Treasury made a donation of £2 million to the DEC. This was in addition to the minimum of £15 million the DEC estimates has been given in tax relief on public contributions to the appeal made through the Gift Aid scheme.

Gift Aid, enables charities to reclaim the basic rate tax on donations they receive, adding 28p to every £1 donated. The donor must give the charity a declaration that they want their donation to be subject to Gift Aid.

DEFENCE

FRES

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects the Future Rapid Effects System to complete its assessment phase; and what he expects the final costs of this phase to be. [15406]

Mr. Ingram: The initial assessment phase is scheduled to complete in November 2006 at an estimated cost of £113 million. As with all projects, however, completion of the assessment phase will be determined by project maturity.

Military Vehicles

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* FV430 series, *(b)* Scimitar, *(c)* Sultan, *(d)* Samson, *(e)* Samaritan, *(f)* Spectan, *(g)* Striker, *(h)* Sabre, *(i)* Scorpion and *(j)* Saxon vehicles are in working order. [10439]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Substantive answer from Adam Ingram to Ann Winterton:

I undertook to write to you in response to your Parliamentary Question of 13 July 2005, *Official Report*, Column 1081W, about the number of Combat Vehicle Reconnaissance (Tracked) CVR(T) vehicles in working order.

As I am sure you will appreciate the number of CVR(T) vehicles available at any one time is a constant variable and depends upon a wide range of factors such as breakdowns, battle damage, availability of labour, spare parts and programmed repair activity. The table provides details about the CVR(T) fleet as at 29 April 2005. The Scorpion and Sabre variants have not been shown as these vehicles were withdrawn from service in 1995 and 2004 respectively.

Details of CVR(T) numbers as at 29 April 2005

Vehicle	*Total fleet (equals columns 2+5+6) (1)*	*Quantity in land forces (equals columns 3+4) (2)*	*Quantity in working order (3)*	*Quantity in first or second line (4)*	*Quantity in fourth line maintenance (5)*	*Other (6)*
FV430 series	1,492	1,154	775	379	34	304
Scimitar	328	240	163	77	27	61
Spartan	478	320	213	107	25	133
Samaritan	50	41	26	15	1	8
Sultan	205	153	99	54	7	45
Samson	50	38	26	12	2	10
Striker	48	31	12	19	0	17
Sturgeon	32	0	0	0	8	24
Salamander	35	0	0	0	8	27
SAXON	622	312	169	143	40	270

It might be useful if I explain in a little more detail how each of the column headings has been defined for the purpose of answering your question:

Column 1—fleet size is the total number of vehicles held by the MOD.

Column 2—the quantity of vehicles held by our Land Forces is the number of vehicles that were available to LAND Command units on the date given. This equates to those in working order and those in first and second line maintenance (see below).

Column 4—this shows the number of those vehicles held locally by LAND Command units undergoing maintenance.

Column 5—is the number of vehicles in 4th line maintenance (see below).

Column 6—this figure refers to vehicles that are currently being used for training, trials and testing with the Design Authority, in Northern Ireland, the Balkans and Cyprus, with RAF Units or undergoing Bowman conversion. Unfortunately we are unable to provide more specific details for this group of vehicles as the information is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

By way of background, you may wish to be aware that first and second line maintenance for our vehicle fleet is provided by the local Light Aid Detachment (LAD) and REME Battalions or by the local army base repair organisation (ABRO) district workshop. First line maintenance can range from simple tasks such as replacing a blown bulb to changing an entire engine. Tasks conducted at second line repair are generally more complicated and time consuming and may require specialist tools and facilities. Fourth line repair is provided by ABRO and is generally programmed in depth repair (base overhaul) or structural repairs such as repairs to battle damaged vehicles. Fourth line repair is the most complex and in depth repair often involving stripping the vehicle of its components and paint removal before the whole vehicle is repaired and reassembled.

It is worth noting at this point that all our vehicle fleets require regular maintenance and for this reason it is MOD policy not to have all of its vehicles available to the front line when not on operations. MOD maintenance and support policies are designed to ensure we maintain our Forces at the appropriate readiness state. Our maintenance programmes are sufficiently flexible to ensure that we can meet increased demands for vehicles from Front Line Commands to meet operational need.

I am placing a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Retained Naval Equipment

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the value of the Royal Navy equipment retained by the Iranian Government following the incident in the Shatt-al-Arab waterway in June 2004; and if he will make a statement. [16711]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Blaby (Mr. Robathan) on 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 118W.

Ships (Fitted Equipment)

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which of the 65 RN and RFA vessels listed in the letter from the Minister of State (Armed Forces) dated 4 July 2005 as having donated ships' fitted equipment between 1 January 2004 and 31 March 2005 are still without the donated equipment; and what the main items of equipment donated were in each case. [14491]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 17 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 414W, to the hon. Member for Blaby (Mr. Robathan).

Ships that donate equipment are either in upkeep or are dropping down the readiness state in preparation for going into upkeep or disposal.

During upkeep, any shortfalls in equipment are considered as part of the overall upkeep package.

To determine and track the aspects of the upkeep work package that are directly attributable to the ship being a donor of fitted equipment could be done only at disproportionate cost.

Whittington Barracks

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of Whittington Barracks. [15651]

Mr. Touhig: I refer my hon. Friend to the answers given to the hon. Member for Lichfield (Michael Fabricant) on 1 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 110W and 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1104W. The study into the future of Army Training Regiment Lichfield and Whittington Barracks will not now be concluded until February 2006.

WALES

Wales (Government)

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how he intends to implement Paragraph 3.12 of the White Paper, Better Government for Wales (Cm 6582), in respect of any bill he introduces in the current session of Parliament. [14951]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will be introducing a bill to defer council tax revaluation. This bill will apply only to England.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Building Regulations

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of respondents who expressed a view endorsed the proposals made in Question 21 of the consultation exercise conducted in 2004 under Part L of the Building Regulations. [13201]

Yvette Cooper: The response to Question 21 is set out as follows. The majority of respondents were from the construction industry. There were very few respondents from members of the public.

	Q21: Do you consider the overall level of improvements proposed for existing buildings to be reasonable? (Please comment on factors affecting your view.)
Too strict	41
About Right	116
Too lenient	62
No view	60

Co-operative Dwellings

Mr. Love: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many homes have been built as co-operative dwellings in *(a)* England and *(b)* Greater London in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [16106]

Yvette Cooper: Information is available only on Co-operative Housing Associations registered with the Housing Corporation and self build housing projects that receive funding from the Housing Corporation. The numbers of completions (including new build, acquisitions and refurbishments) by registered Co-operative Housing Associations are as tabled. The numbers of self build completions with Housing Corporation funding are shown in the second table.

Completions by registered Co-operative Housing Associations (using Approved Development Programme funding)

	(a) England	*(b) London*
1998	159	44
1999	60	22
2000	24	7
2001	100	66
2002	37	21
2003	4	1
2004	5	0
Total	389	161

Completions on Self-Build housing projects (using Approved Development Programme funding)

	(b) London	*(a) England*
1997–98	0	0
1998–99	0	0
1999–2000	8	8
2000–01	3	3
2001–02	22	0
2002–03	16	16
2003–04	8	8
2004–05	10	10
Total	67	45

Decent Homes Standard

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the likelihood of all council housing meeting the Decent Homes Standard by 2010. [16478]

Yvette Cooper: Projections indicate that work completed and plans in place will take us 90 per cent. of the way towards our target to ensure that all social homes are made decent by 2010. We are now focusing our efforts on delivering decent homes for the remaining 10 per cent.

Empty Properties

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps the Government are taking to ensure empty homes are returned to use; and if he will make a statement; [16630]

Mr. Forth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his Department's policies are with regard to bringing into use vacant domestic properties in England. [16398]

Yvette Cooper: The number of empty homes in England has fallen by 10 percent. since 1997, although the number remaining empty for longer than six months has remained roughly constant. We will shortly provide local authorities with new powers under the Housing Act 2004 to require owners to bring such properties back into use.

We are currently consulting on the details of the secondary legislation which will be introduced next year. Once in force, local authorities will be able—as part of their plans to tackle housing shortages locally—to serve Empty Dwelling Management Orders on owners of empty properties, enabling homes to be improved and let to those needing rented

accommodation. Properties will revert to the owners after seven years, or earlier if an authority is satisfied that the owner intends to sell or let the property himself.

In some areas it may be more appropriate to demolish empty properties rather than attempt to bring them back into use, in which case local authorities can be expected to use their existing compulsory purchase powers. This is more likely to be the case in areas of low demand, but even in the nine market pathfinder areas the number of properties to be renovated is likely to exceed the number likely to be demolished by a factor of two.

We will also continue to support the work of the Empty Homes Agency in identifying and publicising best practice on bringing empty homes back into use.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many empty homes there have been in *(a)* the parliamentary constituency of Mid-Bedfordshire and *(b)* the county of Bedfordshire in each year since 1997. [16631]

Yvette Cooper: Information on empty homes is available at local authority and not parliamentary constituency level. The numbers of empty homes in Bedfordshire by district by each year since 1997 are shown in the following table. These figures come from a combination of data supplied by local authorities on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's housing strategy statistical appendix return and the Housing Corporation's regulatory and statistical return. Local authorities will shortly be able to use new powers to bring empty homes back into use.

Total vacant dwellings at 1 April by district in Bedfordshire

Local authority name	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Bedford	2,724	2,474	2,553	2,376	1,782	1,786	2,022	1,940
Mid Bedfordshire	2,253	2,191	1,835	935	1,071	593	1,212	1,224
South Bedfordshire	1,000	983	951	909	962	1,324	1,481	1,084
Bedfordshire	5,977	5,648	5,339	4,220	3,815	3,703	4,715	4,248

Energy Efficiency

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he is taking to improve *(a)* enforcement of and *(b)* compliance with the building regulations in relation to energy efficiency. [16528]

Yvette Cooper: Amendments to the Building Regulations and new guidance from April 2006 will help builders comply with the Regulations and make it easier for local authorities to enforce compliance, while substantially increasing standards. Measures include:

a single route for demonstrating compliance

a requirement for builders to provide more information

mandatory pressure testing

improved technical guidance and checklists

a substantial dissemination and training campaign

authorised competent person self-certification schemes to reduce the burden on building control bodies and builders.

Equal Pay

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of the top 5 per cent. highest paid salaried employees within his Department are women. [15227]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Currently 39 per cent. of members of the senior civil service in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Central) are women. Of which, 1.96 per cent. of the total female population are within the top 5 per cent. highest paid salaried employees within ODPM. However, in the top 10 per cent. of the SCS, 3.9 per cent. of the total female SCS population are high earners; and in the top 15 per cent. of the SCS, 13.7 per cent. fall into this category.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of the top 5 per cent. highest paid salaried employees within his Department are from black and minority ethnic communities. [15228]

Jim Fitzpatrick: There are currently 130 members of the senior civil service in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Central). Of which, 1.96 per cent. are from black and minority ethnic communities and within the top 5 per cent. highest paid salaried employees within ODPM.

Fly-posting

Mark Tami: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many prosecutions for fly-posting on motorway bridges in England and Wales there have been in each of the last five years. [16602]

Yvette Cooper: This information is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Green Belt

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the locations of each development on Green Belt land for which he or his predecessors have *(a)* given planning permission and *(b)* refused planning permission, since 1 May 1997. [4289]

Yvette Cooper: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister or his predecessors has granted planning permission to 143 called-in applications or appeals involving development on Green Belt land between 1 April 1999 and 30 September 2005. Of these, 73 were in accordance with local planning authorities' resolutions to grant permission prior to the call-in of the application by the First Secretary of State. He has also refused planning permission for a further 279 called-in applications or appeals for development on Green Belt land in the same period. Of these, 112 were in accordance with local authorities' decisions to refuse permission. Tables setting out the locations, and dates of the relevant decisions, have been made available in the Libraries of the House.

Comprehensive information is not available for the period from May 1997 to April 1999.

Home Ownership

Mr. Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of *(a)* London and *(b)* Kingston and Surbiton residents (i) rent and (ii) own their dwellings. [16683]

Yvette Cooper: According to the 2001 census: *(a)* 43 per cent. of households in London were renting and 57 per cent. of households were owner occupiers; while *(b)* in the Royal borough of Kingston upon Thames (which includes Surbiton), 29 per cent. of households were renting and 71 per cent. of households were owner occupiers.

Based on more recent (2005) data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), it is estimated that, in spring 2005, 42 per cent. of London households were renting and 58 per cent. of households were owner occupiers. Recent figures for Kingston upon Thames are not available from the LFS as the survey sample is too small to provide reliable estimates at local authority level.

Homelessness

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people in the parliamentary constituency of Mid-Bedfordshire have been classified as homeless in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [16623]

Yvette Cooper: Information about local authorities' actions under homelessness legislation is collected in respect of households, rather than persons, and in terms of local housing authority district. As Mid-Bedfordshire parliamentary constituency covers parts of Bedford, Mid-Bedfordshire and South Bedfordshire district councils, summary information has been presented for all three authorities.

The number of households accepted as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need for each year since 1997–98, and the number of households in temporary accommodation arranged by local authorities under homelessness legislation as at 31 March of each year since 1997, is tabled as follows.

The duty owed to a person accepted as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need is to secure suitable accommodation. If a settled home is not immediately available, the authority may secure temporary accommodation until a settled home becomes available. As an alternative to the provision of temporary accommodation some authorities arrange for households to remain in their current accommodation (homeless at home), until a settled solution becomes available.

Information is also collected on the number of people who sleep rough—that is, those who are literally roofless on a single night—and these are also presented in the table.

	Number of households accepted [1,2]	*Total Households in temporary accommodation* [2,3] *at end of year (31 March)*	*Rough sleepers* [4] *(Persons)*
Bedford District Council			
1997–98	241	33	—
1998–99	283	31	11
1999–2000	365	37	11
2000–01	371	93	7
2001–02	426	51	0
2002–03	485	62	11
2003–04	367	49	3
2004–05	302	47	3
Mid Bedfordshire District Council			
1997–98	82	16	—
1998–99	91	18	1
1999–2000	42	12	1
2000–01	56	19	1
2001–02	109	27	0
2002–03	135	75	0
2003–04	125	37	0
2004–05	144	46	0
South Bedfordshire District Council			
1997–98	211	150	—
1998–99	282	162	0
1999–2000	245	321	0
2000–01	356	360	0
2001–02	284	250	0
2002–03	312	267	0
2003–04	322	377	0
2004–05	297	213	0

[1] Households eligible under homelessness legislation and found to be unintentionally homeless and in a priority need category.
[2] ODPM P1E homelessness returns (quarterly).
[3] Households in accommodation either pending a decision on their homelessness application or awaiting re-allocation of a settled home following acceptance. Excludes those households designated as "homeless at home" that have remained in their existing accommodation and have the same rights to suitable alternative accommodation as those in accommodation arranged by the authority.
[4] ODPM Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (annual). Data not collected prior to 1998.
Note:
Figures provided are for the financial year (i.e. April-March).

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent estimate he has made of the number of rough sleepers in the County of Bedfordshire; and if he will make a statement. [16620]

Yvette Cooper: The most recent estimate, as at June 2005, showed there were 459 people sleeping rough in England on any single night. The annual rough sleeping estimate shows the result of street counts for every area where such a count has taken place and (where no counts have taken place) any estimate of more than 10 rough sleepers provided by local authorities in their 2005 Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (HSSA) return to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Local authorities in Bedfordshire had not conducted recent street counts. Bedfordshire local authorities (Bedford, Mid-Bedfordshire and South Bedfordshire) estimated rough sleeper levels of between 0–10.

Housing Act

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the timetable is for the implementation of the Housing Act 2004. [15223]

Yvette Cooper: I refer to the hon. Member to the written statement made on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 6–7WS, in relation to implementation of Parts 1–4, 6 & 7 of the Housing Act 2004.

We plan to introduce mandatory home information packs under Part 5 of the Act in early 2007. However, many home buyers and sellers will not have to wait to benefit from home information packs since an increasing number of estate agents, surveyors and conveyancers are operating pack schemes on a voluntary basis.

The provisions within Part 6 of the Act, to commence s.225 (covering the preparation of accommodation needs assessment and accommodation strategies for 'Gypsies and Travellers') are planned to be commenced in spring 2006, following consultation on the definition of 'Gypsies and Travellers' for the purposes of the Act.

Minerals Planning Guidance

Mr. Betts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when his Department last issued supplementary advice on the correct application of Minerals Planning Guidance 3 to *(a)* minerals planning authorities and *(b)* the Government Offices of the Regions; what mechanisms are available to his Department to issue supplementary advice to minerals planning authorities on the correct application of Minerals Planning Guidance 3 when considering new applications for surface coal mines; and if he will make a statement. [15970]

Yvette Cooper: It is not appropriate to issue supplementary public advice that would elaborate, gloss or qualify planning policy guidance documents to give a "correct" application. There can only be one statement of policy in force at any one time, and if this is to be changed a new text must be consulted on in the usual way. Minerals Planning Guidance 3 (MPG3) already provides sufficiently clear advice to mineral planning authorities and the coal industry in England on the tests to be applied when considering coal extraction proposals.

Planning applications for coal mining have to meet alternative tests. They must either be environmentally acceptable or, even if not, provide offsetting local or community benefits. The present policy clearly sets these considerations out as alternative tests, not cumulative ones. Paragraph 8 (i) and (ii) of MPG3 is clear in that respect. Staff in our Planning Directorate drew this to the attention of ODPM decision officers, planning Inspectors and Government Office staff in October 2004. Officials in the ODPM and the relevant Government Offices, will continue to examine and comment on draft regional and local planning documents dealing with coal mining development for conformity with national policy on this and other matters dealt with in MPG3, and will if necessary raise matters of non-conformity at the public examinations of plans.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the presumption against surface coal mining contained in Minerals Planning Guidance 3 only applies unless the proposal is environmentally acceptable according to the criteria set out in MPG3 or community benefits can be provided which offset environmental impact; and whether these are *(a)* alternative and *(b)* cumulative tests. [15971]

Yvette Cooper: There is a presumption against open-cast mining unless the proposal is environmentally acceptable or can be made so through the use of planning conditions, but even if this is not possible community benefits that offset the likely impacts can remove that presumption and allow a successful application. The drafting of paragraph 8 (i) and (ii) of MPG3 makes it clear that these are alternative tests, not cumulative ones.

Regional Assemblies

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 18 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1447–48W, on regional chambers, if he will place in the Library copies of the annual audited accounts of each regional chamber for the most recent available year. [15545]

Yvette Cooper: Copies of the latest audited regional assembly accounts have been placed in the Library of the House.

Sustainable Communities Strategy

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on his role in ensuring delivery of the Government's sustainable communities strategy with respect to the work of the local delivery vehicles North Northants together and the West Northamptonshire urban district council. [16803]

Yvette Cooper: The local delivery vehicles North Northants together and the West Northamptonshire development corporation have been established to bring together local partners in these key growth area locations to help achieve our shared goal of more sustainable growth in these areas, maximising the potential of public and private investment to that end. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will be providing funding and sponsorship support to enable them to bring forward projects which meet high standards of sustainability—helping to create well-designed, vibrant communities, where people want to live and work, with quality public services and infrastructure.

Telecommunications Masts

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* telecommunication base stations and *(b)* mobile phone masts have been located in (i) the parliamentary constituency of Mid-Bedfordshire and (ii) the County of Bedfordshire in each year since 1997. [16632]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

However, during September and October every year the mobile network operators write to every local authority with details of their network rollout for the year ahead.

When they write to the local authority they also provide details of their existing sites within the local authority area. The hon. Member may want to contact the network operators for copies of their plans.

Travellers

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 8 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 564W, on Travellers, if he will place in the Library copies of each of the written reports of the appeal decisions made by the Planning Inspectorate or the First Secretary of State for applications which were granted on appeal. [5563]

Yvette Cooper: Copies of those appeal decisions made by the Planning Inspectorate or my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister the First Secretary of State, which were listed in the answer given on 8 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 564W, have been placed in the Libraries of the House. One decision may cover a number of appeals on a single site.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Antisocial Behaviour

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to review section 30 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. [15882]

Paul Goggins: We have no plans to review section 30 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act. Following the High Court ruling that the police have no power to use reasonable force when taking a child home under section 30(6) of the Act, we are applying for leave to appeal to the Court of Appeal.

Departmental Stationery

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of *(a)* paper for printed publications and *(b)* copying paper used by the Department in (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [16200]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The percentages of *(a)* paper for printed publications and *(b)* copying paper used by the department in 2003–04 and 2004–05 from recycled sources are shown in the following table.

The figure for paper for printed publications only covers the period 1 November 2004 to 31 March 2005 because until then the department did not buy their paper directly.

The post-consumer waste content of the copying paper was unknown to the supplier as it varies over time according to demand and availability of supply. The recycled content of the paper is described as unspecified.

Percentage from recycled sources

	2003–04	*2004–05*
(a) Paper for printed publications	Unknown	2
(b) Copying paper	65.24	83

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports; and what (i) the name of each paper used and (ii) the recycled and post-consumer recycled content of each paper is. [16203]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The contract to supply paper and paper products to the Home Department is held by the company Office Depot. In addition to the aforementioned contract the prison service also hold a contract with James MacNaughton Paper Group Ltd. to supply paper and paper products to Prison Service Enterprise and Supply Services Internal Industries.

Office Depot provide a wide range of stationery products to the Home Office and to provide details of every paper and paper product supplied would incur disproportionate costs.

I am however able to provide details of the top 10 paper and paper products purchased from Office Depot by brand name and where available the recycled and post consumer recycled content of each paper in the categories requested.

Details of the top 10 paper and paper products purchased from James MacNaughton Paper Group Ltd. by brand name and where available the recycled and post consumer recycled content for copier paper is in the following table.

(a) Copier paper

	Percentage		
Name of paper used	*Recycled content (unspecified)*	*Recycled content (post-consumer waste)*	*Recycled content (pre-consumer waste)*
Niceday Environmental 3500 Recycled Paper A4 80gsm	80–89	[1]	0
Easyday 3000 Laser Copier A4 80gWH	0	0	0
Easyday 4000 A4 80 g HE	0	0	0
Niceday 6000 A4 80 GSM White	0	0	0
Niceday Tinted Paper Pale Yellow	0	0	0
Niceday Pastel Tinted Paper Pale Blue	0	0	0
Envt 3500 Recycled Paper A3 80gsm	80–89	[1]	0
Niceday Pastel Tinted Paper Pale Green	0	0	0
Niceday Pastel Tinted Paper Pale Pink	0	0	0
Niceday Pastel Tinted Paper Mid Green	0	0	0

[1] Various pcw content depending on availability

(b) Stationery

	Percentage		
Stationery item	*Recycled content (unspecified)*	*Recycled content (post-consumer waste)*	*Recycled content (pre-consumer waste)*
N2 Divider A4 10Pt Col Tabs	0	0	0
N2 Divider A4 5Part Colour Tab	0	0	0
Easyday Desk Calendar A4 15 Month 2006	0	0	0
Envt Divider A4 10Pt Col Tabs	100	0	100
Easyday Notes 3x3 Yellow	0	0	0
N2 Divider 10Pt Extra Wide	0	0	0
N2 Easydev Year Planner Unmounted 2006	0	0	0
N2 Manuscript Book A4 96LF	0	0	0
Easyday Diary A5 one W/T/V Black 2006	0	0	0
Envt Divider A4 5PT Colour Tab	100	0	100

(c) Envelopes

Type of envelope	Recycled content (unspecified)	Percentage Recycled content (post-consumer waste)	Recycled content (pre-consumer waste)
Envt Bubble Postal Bag 020788	0	0	0
Easyday Env 114x1629088 White	0	0	0
Envt Envelope 324x229 90 Self seal Buff	100	85	0
Easyday	0	0	0
Envelope 110x2209088 White	—	—	—
Mail Lite 270x360 Gold Bubble Lined	0	0	0
Environmental Envelope 229x1629088 BF	100	85	0
Easyday Env 324x22911588 Man	100	85	0
Environmental Envelope 324x229 90g Self Seal Buff	100	85	0
Environmental Envelope C4 324x229mm Manilla Gummed 90g	100	85	0
Environmental Envelope C5 229x1 62mm Manila Gummed 90g	100	85	0

(d) Paper for reports

Name of paper used	Recycled content (unspecified)	Percentage Recycled content (post-consumer waste)	Recycled content (pre-consumer waste)
Niceday Duplicator Blue A4 80gsm	0	10	90
Niceday Duplicator Yellow A4 80gsm	0	10	90
Niceday 11x14.5 1PT70g Pain Laser	0	0	0
HP Premium	n/a	n/a	n/a
Plus Photo Paper A4 C6832A	—	—	—
Niceday 11x9.5 1PT70g Plain Micro Vertical Perforations	0	0	0
Niceday 11x14.5 1PT60g Plain	0	0	0
Niceday Duplicator A4 80g White	0	10	90
Nicely 11x9.5 1PT60g Plain Micro Vertical Perforations	0	0	0
Niceday Duplicator Green A4 80gsm	0	10	90
Niceday 11x14.5 1 PT 60g Music Ruled	0	0	0

n/a = not available

James MacNaughton Paper Group Ltd paper products

Name of paper used	Recycled content (unspecified)	Percentage Recycled content (post-consumer waste)	Recycled content (pre-consumer waste)
Challenger T/Pulp	No	No	No
HMP Offset	No	No	No
HM Manila	Yes	No	80
Reacto	No	No	No
Prosp/Kingstn	No	No	No
Challenger Velvet	No	No	No
Reflex	No	No	No
Challenger W/Pulp	No	No	No
Supercol	No	No	No
Greybd	Yes	100	No

Green Ministers

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the meetings at which his Department has been represented on the delivery of sustainable development across Government as co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-committee of Green Ministers. [16193]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Although the Government publish the title, membership and terms of reference of Cabinet Committees, it has been the practice of successive Governments not to disclose details of their proceedings.

Private Finance Initiative

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 30 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1672W, on the private finance initiative, what the accounting treatment is of assets and liabilities for each of the listed private finance initiatives and public private partnerships; and whether this treatment is compliant with *(a)* UK generally accepted accounting practices and *(b)* international financial reporting standards. [16338]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The following table shows how the private finance initiative and public private partnership projects, previously listed in 1672W are accounted for by the Home Office. The balance sheet treatment of our private finance initiative and public private partnership projects are determined by an independent auditor following United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, in accordance with Financial Reporting Standards issued by the independent Accounting Standards Board (ASB). The ASB has a convergence timetable for the adoption of international financial accounting standards, which central Government will follow.

Home Office PFI/PPP Projects

Commissioning body/Project name	Signed	Operational	On /off balance sheet
Home Office/ IT 2000 (Sirius)	Yes	Yes	Off
Youth Justice Board/ STC Cookham Wood (Medway)	Yes	Yes	On
Youth Justice Board/ STC Hassockfield	Yes	Yes	On
Youth Justice Board/ STC Rainsbrook (Onley) Expansion	Yes	Yes	On
Youth Justice Board/ STC Oakhill Expansion	Yes	Yes	On
STC HMP & YOI Ashfield/ HMPS	Yes	Yes	On
Prison Service/ HMP Altcourse	Yes	Yes	On
Prison Service/ HMP Ashford	Yes	Yes	On
Prison Service/ HMP Dovegate	Yes	Yes	On
Prison Service/ HMP Forest Bank	Yes	Yes	On
Prison Service/ HMP Lowdham Grange	Yes	Yes	On
Prison Service/ HMP Parc	Yes	Yes	On
Prison Service/ HMP Peterborough	Yes	Yes	On
Prison Service/ HMP Rye Hill	Yes	Yes	On
Prison Service/ Quantum	Yes	Yes	Off
Passport Service/ PASS Project	Yes	Yes	Off
Home Office/ Home Office Central London Accommodation Strategy (2 Street)	Yes	Yes	Off
Prison Service/ HES 1	Yes	Yes	On
Prison Service/ HES 2	Yes	Yes	On

Private Prisons

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the progress of private prisons in England and Wales in meeting the decency agenda. [14175]

Fiona Mactaggart: Work to assess progress on the decency agenda continues across the prison estate with a number of projects involving consideration of the contracted estate. These include:

A large scale longitudinal survey of prisoners (the Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction Survey), which will address decency issues across the estate, including in contracted prisons. Work is scheduled to start by the end of 2005 and it is expected that initial data, particularly on prisoners' experiences of the first few weeks of custody, will be available towards the end of 2006.

A new project, funded by the Home Office, is to be conducted by the Institute of Criminology at the University of Cambridge. This will compare prisoner well-being in private prisons against that in public sector prisons, and those factors which may explain any variance.

Telephone Inquiries

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what facilities his Department has to deal with telephone inquiries in *(a)* Welsh, *(b)* Scots Gaelic and *(c)* Irish Gaelic. [14733]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information is as follows.

(a) The Central Home Office telephone points for the Home Office, including the Immigration and Nationality Department, do not have facilities for handling calls in Welsh. Her Majesty's Prison Service will handle calls in Welsh via their regional office. Any caller contacting the UK Passport Service call centre from a land line in Wales will be offered the option of continuing the call in Welsh or English.

(b) and *(c)* No part of the Department has facilities to handle telephone calls in Scots Gaelic or Irish Gaelic.

The Department and its agencies do have approved Welsh Language Schemes.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adoptions

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assurances she has received regarding the legality of British adoptions in other European Union member states that have ratified the European Convention on the Adoption of Children. [15864]

Maria Eagle: The 1967 European Convention on the Adoption of Children aims to harmonise the laws in contracting states to promote the welfare of children who are adopted. However, the convention does not provide for international recognition of adoptions made in the UK, or in any other country. Since it is the case that this issue is not covered by any European convention, it remains a matter for each European Union member state which has ratified the convention to decide for itself whether to recognise adoptions made outside its jurisdiction.

Adult Community Learning

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent assessment she has made of the demand for adult community learning. [16723]

Phil Hope: We are committed to safeguarding the continued availability of a wide range of learning opportunities for adults for personal and community development. We said in the White Paper "Skills: Getting on in business, getting on at work", published in March this year, that the DfES and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) would agree each year an overall indicative budget for such learning programmes.

We have made no national assessment of demand for adult community learning; at local level it is the LSC's responsibility, with its local stakeholders and providers, to plan provision in the light both of local needs and national priorities.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on funding for adult community Learning in *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* 2006–07. [16851]

Phil Hope: In funding adult community learning we continue to meet the commitment most recently set out in the White Paper "Skills: Getting on in business, getting on at work", published in March this year, that the DfES and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) would agree each year an overall indicative budget for such learning programmes. In 2004/05 nationally we provided over £207 million to the Learning and Skills Council in support of this learning. This has risen to £210 million in 2005/06.

We will make announcements about the budgets for 2006/07 and 2007/08 shortly.

Adult Learning (Essex)

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to ensure that the requirement for adult learning in Essex is met. [16724]

Phil Hope *[holding answer 10 October 2005]:* We will ensure adult learning provision in Essex is provided through the funding from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to further education colleges, local authorities and other providers. In 2005/06 we have emphasised our priorities for further education which guarantee a place in education or training for all young people and a focus on support for adults without a solid foundation of employability skills. In 2005/06 total funding for FE will increase by 4.4 per cent. compared to 2004/05. Funding for non-vocational learning opportunities for adults, through the Adult and Community Learning Budget has also increased. In 2004/05 nationally we provided over £207 million to the Learning and Skills Council in support of this learning. This has risen to £210 million in 2005/06.

Employer Training Pilots

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether funding for the employer training pilots from the Learning and Skills Council is contingent on employees completing NVQ qualifications *(a)* in part and *(b)* in full; and if she will make a statement. [12740]

Maria Eagle: Funding for Employer Training Pilots (ETPs) is weighted towards the successful completion of qualifications by participating employees.

Training Providers receive 20 per cent. of training costs at the start of training, on receipt of Individual Learner Record registration from the awarding body; 30 per cent. of training costs on receipt of a certificate confirming participating employees have reached the mid-point of their training; and 50 per cent. of training costs when learners complete their training, on receipt of evidence of internal verification from the provider and subsequent certificate from the awarding body.

Wage compensation to a participating employee's employer is paid only on their completion of training.

Looked-after Children

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many looked-after children entered higher education in each of the last three years in *(a)* England, *(b)* each region and *(c)* each local authority; and if she will make a statement. [16041]

Jacqui Smith: The information available is shown in the following table:

Number and percentage of former care leavers who were in higher education on their 19th birthday and who were looked after on 1 April in their 17th year, 2002–2004[1]

Number

	Number of former care leavers			*Number in Higher Education (above A level)*		
	2002	*2003*	*2004*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
England	4,700	4,900	5,100	200	300	300
North East	240	250	260	10	10	10
Shire Counties						
Durham	40	45	45	[2]	[2]	[2]
Northumberland	30	35	25	0	[2]	[2]
Unitary Authorities						
Darlington	10	10	5	0	[2]	0
Hartlepool	[2]	5	10	0	0	0
Middlesbrough	5	10	10	[2]	0	0
Redcar and Cleveland	[2]	10	10	[2]	0	[2]
Stockton On Tees	20	10	10	0	0	[2]
Metropolitan Districts						
Gateshead	30	25	20	0	0	0
Newcastle Upon Tyne	30	35	40	[2]	[2]	0
North Tyneside	25	20	25	0	0	[2]
South Tyneside	20	20	20	0	0	[2]
Sunderland	25	25	35	[2]	0	0
North West	670	680	700	20	30	20
Shire Counties						
Cheshire	40	45	40	[2]	[2]	[2]
Cumbria	35	40	40	[2]	[2]	0
Lancashire	125	110	115	5	10	10
Unitary Authorities						
Blackburn and Darwen	20	20	25	[2]	[2]	0
Blackpool	20	20	15	0	[2]	0
Halton	10	15	10	0	0	0
Warrington	5	10	15	0	0	0
Metropolitan Districts						
Bolton	25	20	15	[2]	[2]	0
Bury	15	15	20	0	0	0
Knowsley	10	20	20	0	[2]	[2]
Liverpool	70	85	80	[2]	[2]	[2]
Manchester	85	75	95	0	0	[2]
Oldham	25	20	20	[2]	0	[2]
Rochdale	20	15	10	0	0	0
Salford	30	35	40	[2]	[2]	[2]
Sefton	10	20	20	[2]	[2]	[2]
St Helens	20	20	20	0	[2]	0
Stockport	30	25	25	0	0	0
Tameside	15	10	15	[2]	0	0
Trafford	10	10	20	0	[2]	0
Wigan	25	25	15	0	[2]	[2]
Wirral	20	25	35	[2]	0	[2]
Yorkshire and The Humber	470	470	490	10	[2]	10
Shire Counties						
North Yorkshire	40	35	35	[2]	[2]	[2]
Unitary Authorities						
East Riding Yorkshire	10	15	10	0	0	[2]
Kingston Upon Hull	40	35	40	0	0	[2]
North East Lincolnshire	20	20	15	[2]	0	[2]
North Lincolnshire	15	15	15	0	0	[2]
York	10	10	15	0	[2]	0
Metropolitan Districts						
Barnsley	20	30	25	[2]	0	0
Bradford	50	45	45	[2]	0	[2]
Calderdale	20	25	20	0	0	0
Doncaster	30	20	30	[2]	0	0
Kirklees	35	35	30	0	0	0

Number and percentage of former care leavers who were in higher education on their 19th birthday and who were looked after on 1 April in their 17th year, 2002–2004[1]

Number

	Number of former care leavers			*Number in Higher Education (above A level)*		
	2002	*2003*	*2004*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Leeds	85	70	85	[2]	[2]	0
Rotherham	15	25	25	0	0	0
Sheffield	35	50	50	[2]	0	[2]
Wakefield	40	30	50	[2]	[2]	[2]
East Midlands	310	300	330	10	10	10
Shire Counties						
Derbyshire	45	50	55	[2]	[2]	[2]
Leicestershire	25	25	30	0	0	0
Lincolnshire	35	40	35	[2]	[2]	[2]
Northamptonshire	75	50	75	[2]	0	[2]
Nottinghamshire	35	35	30	[2]	0	0
Unitary Authorities						
Derby	25	30	35	[2]	[2]	0
Leicester	30	25	30	[2]	[2]	0
Nottingham	40	40	40	[2]	[2]	[2]
Rutland	[2]	[2]	[2]	0	0	0
West Midlands	510	520	540	40	20	30
Shire Counties						
Shropshire	30	15	25	10	[2]	0
Staffordshire	45	60	50	[2]	0	[2]
Warwickshire	50	35	40	[2]	0	[2]
Worcestershire	45	50	55	[2]	5	[2]
Unitary Authorities						
Herefordshire	20	20	15	[2]	0	[2]
Stoke-on-Trent	20	30	25	[2]	0	[2]
Telford and Wrekin	20	20	15	[2]	0	0
Metropolitan Districts						
Birmingham	135	135	155	[2]	5	[2]
Coventry	20	30	25	[2]	[2]	[2]
Dudley	20	25	20	0	0	0
Sandwell	35	35	35	[2]	[2]	[2]
Solihull	25	15	30	[2]	[2]	[2]
Walsall	20	25	25	0	[2]	0
Wolverhampton	25	20	25	[2]	[2]	[2]
East of England	410	410	410	10	20	20
Shire Counties						
Bedfordshire	30	25	30	[2]	0	[2]
Cambridgeshire	40	45	35	[2]	0	[2]
Essex	85	105	85	[2]	10	[2]
Hertfordshire	70	65	70	[2]	[2]	[2]
Norfolk	75	55	50	[2]	[2]	[2]
Suffolk	35	45	45	[2]	[2]	[2]
Unitary Authorities						
Luton	15	10	30	0	0	[2]
Peterborough	25	20	20	[2]	0	[2]
Southend	20	20	15	[2]	[2]	0
Thurrock	15	20	25	0	[2]	[2]
London	1,100	1,150	1,310	70	140	110
Inner London	520	560	660	40	60	50
Camden	35	30	45	10	5	[2]
City of London	0	[2]	[2]	0	0	0
Greenwich	30	40	35	0	0	0
Hackney	50	55	50	[2]	[2]	[2]
Hammersmith and Fulham	45	45	60	[2]	[2]	5
Islington	40	70	70	0	[2]	[2]
Kensington and Chelsea	30	35	30	[2]	0	5
Lambeth	70	85	120	[2]	10	15
Lewisham	50	50	60	[2]	[2]	[2]
Southwark	70	60	80	10	5	[2]
Tower Hamlets	25	20	30	0	[2]	[2]
Wandsworth	35	50	35	[2]	15	[2]
Westminster	35	20	35	[2]	[2]	[2]
Outer London	580	590	640	20	80	60
Barking and Dagenham	25	25	35	0	[2]	0
Barnet	35	25	25	[2]	0	[2]
Bexley	25	15	30	[2]	0	[2]
Brent	30	30	40	[2]	[2]	5
Bromley	40	25	30	0	[2]	[2]
Croydon	30	45	60	[2]	[2]	[2]
Ealing	40	50	45	[2]	[2]	[2]
Enfield	35	30	35	[2]	5	15
Haringey	40	55	80	0	[2]	[2]
Harrow	25	30	10	0	10	[2]

Number and percentage of former care leavers who were in higher education on their 19th birthday and who were looked after on 1 April in their 17th year, 2002–2004[1]

Number

	Number of former care leavers			Number in Higher Education (above A level)		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Havering	20	10	20	[2]	[2]	[2]
Hillingdon	45	75	60	0	[2]	10
Hounslow	20	25	30	[2]	[2]	0
Kingston Upon Thames	20	15	15	[2]	[2]	[2]
Merton	15	15	15	0	[2]	0
Newham	45	35	40	[2]	5	5
Redbridge	10	10	20	[2]	[2]	[2]
Richmond Upon Thames	15	15	20	0	[2]	[2]
Sutton	5	20	10	0	[2]	[2]
Waltham Forest	65	40	30	[2]	30	[2]
South East	610	700	650	20	40	20
Shire Counties						
Buckinghamshire	30	30	20	[2]	[2]	0
East Sussex	40	35	35	0	0	[2]
Hampshire	80	85	75	10	[2]	[2]
Kent	120	135	135	5	5	[2]
Oxfordshire	30	35	40	0	0	[2]
Surrey	55	70	65	[2]	[2]	[2]
West Sussex	65	100	85	0	10	10
Unitary Authorities						
Bracknell Forest	5	15	20	0	0	0
Brighton and Hove	25	25	30	0	[2]	[2]
Isle of Wight	15	15	10	0	0	0
Medway Towns	25	25	25	[2]	[2]	0
Milton Keynes	25	25	25	[2]	[2]	[2]
Portsmouth	10	25	20	0	0	0
Reading	25	15	10	[2]	0	0
Slough	15	10	15	0	0	[2]
Southampton	20	25	20	0	[2]	0
West Berkshire	10	10	5	0	0	0
Windsor and Maidenhead	10	10	10	0	0	0
Wokingham	10	5	[2]	0	0	0
South West	420	440	450	20	20	30
Shire Counties						
Cornwall	45	45	50	[2]	[2]	5
Devon	70	55	65	[2]	[2]	[2]
Dorset	25	25	35	[2]	[2]	[2]
Gloucestershire	45	35	45	[2]	[2]	[2]
Isles Of Scilly	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somerset	35	40	40	[2]	[2]	[2]
Wiltshire	25	25	20	[2]	[2]	[2]
Unitary Authorities						
Bath and North East Somerset	15	10	15	[2]	0	[2]
Bournemouth	15	20	15	0	[2]	[2]
Bristol	45	75	45	[2]	[2]	0
North Somerset	15	20	10	[2]	[2]	0
Plymouth	30	30	40	[2]	[2]	[2]
Poole	15	10	10	[2]	0	0
South Gloucestershire	10	15	15	[2]	[2]	0
Swindon	10	20	15	0	[2]	[2]
Torbay	15	20	25	0	0	[2]

[1] Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short term placements.
[2] Figures between 1 and 5 have been suppressed.

Notes:
1. Figures are taken from the Department's SSDA 903 return.
2. National figures are rounded to the nearest 100. Regional figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
3. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5.

Source:
DFES

Paternal Rights

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps the Government are taking to improve the enforcement of fathers' rights to contact with their children. [16869]

Maria Eagle: The Government believe that children benefit from a continuing relationship with both parents following divorce or separation, where it is safe and in the child's best interests. The Children Act 1989 supports this and under the Act it is the welfare and interests of the child concerned that are paramount, not the rights of parents.

Where contact has been agreed or ordered by the courts, it is essential that the terms of court orders are followed. The Children and Adoption Bill has introduced legislation which, if approved by Parliament, will give judges additional powers to facilitate contact and enforce contact orders. In addition to the current system of fines and imprisonment, they will be able to refer parents to a counsellor or a parenting programme or make enforcement orders

imposing requirements for unpaid work. Judges will also be able to award financial compensation, for example where the cost of a holiday has been lost. These additional levers will be available to the courts at any stage in a contact case, if the court considers they would assist resolution. These provisions will be available for use by the courts in relation to both mothers and fathers.

Youth Matters Green Paper

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the opportunity card proposed in the Youth Matters Green Paper will be connected to the National Identity Register proposed in the Identity Cards Bill. [16442]

Maria Eagle: We currently propose that the Opportunity Card will be available to young people from age 13 up to 19. It will be delivered by local authorities and be available in England only. The UK-wide National Identity Register will cover people age 16 and over but my Department is currently discussing with the Home Office how the two schemes might be linked.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the future of the Connexions card in the light of the entitlement card proposed in the Youth Matters Green Paper. [16443]

Maria Eagle: We will make decisions about the future of the Connexions card when we have completed the evaluation of the Youth Opportunity Card pilots.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the companies that have expressed an interest in working with the Government to develop the entitlement card scheme proposed in the Youth Matters Green Paper. [16444]

Maria Eagle: As of 6 October 2005, Transport for London and Mouchel Parkman had expressed an interest in working with the Department for Education and Skills to develop the Youth Opportunity Card.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the existing youth cards schemes that will be brought together within the entitlement card scheme proposed in the Youth Matters Green Paper. [16445]

Maria Eagle: We are at the early stages of design and have not yet selected the areas that will take part in the pilots. Once we know the pilot areas, we will be clear about which card schemes we need to work with and build on.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her estimate is of the cost to business of installing equipment necessary to read the information stored on the entitlement card proposed in the Youth Matters Green Paper. [16446]

Maria Eagle: We are still at the early stage of pilot design. Youth Matters makes clear our expectation that we will build where possible on existing schemes and infrastructure. However this is a pilot, and one of the aspects we want to test is the impact on providers and businesses.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what data she intends will be stored on the entitlement card proposed in the Youth Matters Green Paper. [16447]

Maria Eagle: The Youth Opportunity Card pilot will test whether giving real influence and spending power to young people increases their likelihood of engaging in constructive activities. At this early stage in pilot development, and before the end of the Youth Matters consultation, no decisions have been taken about what data a card would need to store.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Divis Mountain Transmitter

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether the transmitter on Divis Mountain provides freeview coverage for the whole of the City of Lisburn; and if she will make a statement. [15337]

James Purnell: Most households in Lisburn should be able to receive digital terrestrial television (DTT) services, although there may be problems with reception towards the north west of the area.

The regional timetable for digital switchover has now been published, with the Ulster region due to be switched in the second half of 2012.

Our plans are based on the conversion of the entire terrestrial network, so that the level of coverage at switchover can match existing analogue coverage—around 98.5 per cent. of households. This is in line with our commitments that everyone who can currently receive analogue services today should be able to receive them in digital form and that as many people as possible have access to a choice of platforms.

Licensing Fees (Charities)

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the rates charities, who operate licensed premises, are charged for their new licensing fee. [16552]

James Purnell: The licensing fees have been set centrally by Government at a level to enable licensing authorities to recover fully their legitimate administration, inspection and enforcement costs, while at the same time achieve arrangements which are fair to business, non commercial organisations and to other individuals seeking licences. The Government have established an Independent Licensing Fees Review Panel to consider whether the fees regime is meeting these objectives. The panel will deliver an interim review shortly, followed by a final report in autumn 2006.

National Sports Foundation

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much will be allocated to the National Sports Foundation *(a)* in 2005–06 and *(b)* for each subsequent year for which budgets have been agreed. [15632]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 10 October 2005]:* The total allocated to the National Sports Foundation is £27.5 million. For 2006–07, £7.5 million has been allocated and for 2007–08, £20 million has been allocated.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received from sports bodies on the National Sports Foundation. [15634]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 10 October 2005]:* We have been engaged in extensive and ongoing discussions with five major sports governing bodies. These discussions continue.

Reserve Art Collections

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many items in national museums and galleries have not been on public display in the past three years. [16578]

Mr. Lammy: The number of collection items in the DCMS-sponsored museums and galleries that have not been on public display in the past three years has recently been estimated to be around 105 million. These items are very diverse, and include large amounts of organic material and archaeological finds which are not suitable for public display; for example, a study in 2002 showed that the Natural History Museum has 70 million organic items in storage. Many of the items not on display such as books and archive material, prints, photographs and textiles are available to the public on request. The large majority of works of art not on display comprise of prints or items in need of conservation. Our museums and galleries actively pursue a policy of loans and touring exhibitions throughout the UK and overseas to ensure that their collections are accessible to as wide an audience as possible.

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the most recent estimate was of the size of the reserve collections of the national museums and galleries. [16579]

Mr. Lammy: My Department last made an estimate of items in the reserve collections of 17 DCMS-sponsored museums and galleries in 2002 as part of a study of storage facilities. This showed that there were more than 136 million items in storage.

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when the last estimate was made of the number of works of art in the reserve collections of the national museums and galleries. [16580]

Mr. Lammy: My Department last made an estimate of items in the reserve collections of 17 DCMS-sponsored museums and galleries in 2002 as part of a study of storage facilities. This study covered all types of collection items stored, including works of art.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Ambassadors (Misconduct)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many complaints of misconduct made against Her Majesty's Ambassadors by subordinate staff are outstanding; how long each case has been outstanding; whether investigations in each case have been concluded; and when in each case it is anticipated the complaint will be determined. [15742]

Mr. Straw: None.

Bangladesh

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what monitoring of human rights in Bangladesh is being undertaken by his officials; and what assistance has been offered to deal with investigations into assassination attempts. [16210]

Dr. Howells: The British high commission in Dhaka closely monitors human rights in Bangladesh. The high commission has regular dialogue with the Government of Bangladesh and lobbies bilaterally and jointly with EU partners on issues identified as key human rights priorities in Bangladesh. The high commission also has regular contacts with human rights non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and activists in Bangladesh, and provides funding to NGOs for human rights programmes.

Where we can and when invited to do so, we work with the Bangladeshi authorities to improve their capacity to identify and prosecute those involved in extremist activities. After the grenade attack in Sylhet in May 2004 in which the British high commissioner was injured, there were visits to Bangladesh by specialist Metropolitan police officers to advise and assist local agencies with their investigations. Following their return, the Metropolitan Police Service offered further practical assistance and informal advice to the Bangladeshi authorities.

Commonwealth Day

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether his Department plans to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Commonwealth Day. [16708]

Ian Pearson: We are in touch with the Council of Commonwealth Societies, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth Governments about how best to commemorate Commonwealth Day 2006. No plans have yet been made for the 50th Commonwealth Day, due in March 2007.

Diplomatic Immunity

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list offences committed overseas in 2004 by UK nationals holding diplomatic immunity. [16746]

Dr. Howells: We are not aware of any offences committed overseas in 2004 by UK nationals holding diplomatic immunity.

G8 Summit

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many people who were *(a)* delegates and *(b)* representatives of the media attended the G8 summit in Gleneagles, broken down by country of representation. [15657]

Mr. Straw: The total number of accredited delegates to the G8 Summit was 2,358, broken down as follows:

G8: United Kingdom: 70; Canada: 171; France: 127; Germany: 75; Italy: 74; Japan: 473; Russia: 439; USA: 489. European Commission: 24

Outreach nations/international organisations: Algeria: 13; Brazil: 73; China: 140; Ethiopia: five; Ghana: 11; India: 26; Mexico: 40; Nigeria: 20; Senegal: five; South Africa: 41; Tanzania: six; African Union: nine; International Energy Agency (IEA): five; International Monetary Fund (IMF): six; World Bank: five; UN: 13; World Trade Organisation (WTO): five.

A total of 3,051 members of the media were accredited, though not all attended the summit. The majority of these accredited independently so did not represent a particular country. 701 were attached to the delegations, broken down as follows:

G8: United Kingdom: 40; Canada: 25; France: 56; Germany: 28; Italy: 0; Japan: 35; Russia: 78; USA: 268. European Commission: 0

Outreach nations/international organisations: Algeria: 16; Brazil: two; China: 67; Ethiopia: four; Ghana: 10; India: 31; Mexico: 15; Nigeria: eight; Senegal: four; South Africa: 12; Tanzania: 0; African Union: 0; World Bank: one; UN: one; WTO: 0; IEA: 0; IMF: 0.

Handcuffs (Exports)

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department's policy is on the export of over-sized handcuffs; to which countries over-sized handcuffs are not allowed to be exported; for what reasons; and if he will make a statement. [15515]

Dr. Howells: All export licence applications for over-sized handcuffs are assessed on a case by case basis against the consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria. The UK Government does not allow the export of over-sized handcuffs where they might be used as part of leg-irons or shackles. We are fully committed to this policy and to the rigorous and transparent implementation of our export controls. European Union member states have adopted a Council Regulation (EC) No. 1236/2005 (O.J.L200, 30.7.2005), which will enter into force on 30 July 2006, concerning the trade in goods which could be used for capital punishment, torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. This regulation includes provisions governing the transfer of handcuffs. The regulation is consistent with the UK's current policy on the export of over-sized handcuffs.

Iraq

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the *(a)* role, *(b)* mandate, *(c)* budget, *(d)* diplomatic status, *(e)* level of support to be accorded by UK diplomats to, *(f)* level of security accorded to and *(g)* level of security caveated documents releasable to the European Union Rule of Law Mission for Iraq. [15915]

Dr. Howells: The role of the EU Rule of Law Mission is to provide training for up to 770 senior and high-potential officials primarily from the police, judiciary and penitentiary to strengthen management capacity and improve skills and procedures in criminal investigation, in full respect for the rule of law and human rights.

Training takes place in the EU. Trainers and training courses are supplied and funded by contributing EU member states while the EU funds the common costs for the mission. This includes the organisational and management staff and the administrative costs for the mission. The mission has a co-ordinating office in Brussels, and a liaison office in Baghdad, which co-ordinates between the Iraqi authorities and the course organisers.

The mission's mandate was granted by a Joint Action agreed by the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 7 March 2005.

The budget for the common costs of the mission is sourced from the Common Foreign Security Policy Budget and is €10 million. This covers the administrative costs of the Brussels co-ordination office and the Baghdad liaison office.

Members of the Baghdad liaison office do not have diplomatic status. This means that they are subject to Iraqi law. The British embassy and members of the office are currently negotiating diplomatic recognition with the Iraqi authorities, which would give them a level of immunity under Coalition Provisional Authority Order 17.

The UK provides accommodation and security and protection services for the five-person Baghdad liaison office. The EU reimburses the UK for the services provided.

Members of the EU team based in Iraq are accorded the same levels of protection as British diplomats

The Baghdad liaison office is situated inside the British embassy building. This is in a secure, guarded compound, inside the international zone. Transfers to and from the airport are by helicopter.

The release of classified documents outside of normal government channels such as to the EU is decided on a case by case basis. The originator of the document has the final say over its release and documents would be edited to remove any information where its release would be damaging.

Private Finance Initiative

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 15 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 474–78W, on the private finance initiative, what total value of assets and liabilities for each of the listed private finance initiatives and public private partnerships is recorded on the Government balance sheet; what proportion of assets and liabilities is listed; what the accounting treatment is for assets and liabilities; and

whether it is compatible with *(a)* generally-accepted accounting practices and *(b)* international financial reporting standards. [15957]

Mr. Straw: In connection with the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract with Arteos, the British embassy in Berlin is recorded at a book value of £9,672,347.18 within the departmental balance sheet of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) as at 31 March 2005 (unaudited).

The PFI contract with Global Cro[illegible] is treated as off-balance sheet.

The public private partnerships (PPP) contract with Hewlett Packard is included as a capital commitment in the departmental resource accounts for the year ended 31 March 2005 which states that the capital commitment is estimated at £83 million over seven years of the total value of the contract of £179 million, the balance to be expensed when incurred.

The accounting policy in respect of PFI transactions is stated in the resource accounts as follows.

"PFI transactions have been accounted for in accordance with the Resource Accounting Manual (RAM) requirements. Where the balance of the risks and rewards of ownership of the PFI property are borne by the PFI operator, the PFI payments are recorded as an operating cost. Where the FCO has contributed assets, a prepayment for their fair value is recognised and amortised over the life of the PFI contract. Where at the end of the PFI contract a property reverts to the FCO, the difference between the expected fair value of the residual on reversion and any agreed payment on reversion is built up over the life of the contract by capitalising part of the unitary charge each year. Where the balance of risks and rewards of ownership of the PFI property is borne by the FCO, the property is recognised as a fixed asset and the liability to pay for it is accounted for as a finance lease. Contract payments are apportioned between a reduction in the capital obligation and charges to the Operating Cost Statement for service performance and finance cost."

This is in accordance with HM Treasury's Resource Accounting Manual which is compatible with generally accepted accounting practices and is broadly compatible with international financial reporting standards. The convergence of Government Accounting and international financial reporting standards is subject to consideration and review by the Financial Reporting Advisory Board and the Treasury.

Western Sahara

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with *(a)* Morocco and *(b)* UN officials on a possible referendum on the future of the Western Sahara. [16206]

Dr. Howells: I discussed the question of Western Sahara with Moroccan Ministers and senior officials in July.

The United Kingdom fully supports the efforts of the UN Secretary-General and his new Personal Envoy to Western Sahara, Peter van Walsum, to find a just, lasting and mutually acceptable solution to the Western Sahara dispute. The UK supported UN Security Council resolution 1598, adopted on 28 April, which extends the mandate of the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara until 31 October 2005. However, there are no plans for a UN referendum to be held in the near future.

We continue to urge all parties to the dispute to engage constructively with the UN. To this end senior UK officials regularly meet UN officials, including recently with Peter van Walsum.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Fraud Hotline

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what contracts have been awarded to advertising and public relations agencies in connection with the benefit fraud hotline in each year since the service commenced; and what the value of each contract was; [8195]

(2) how much was spent on advertising and communications to promote the benefit fraud hotline in each year since the service started. [8214]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department has not run any campaigns specifically to promote the benefit fraud hotline since 2001, although the number has been featured in the targeting benefit fraud campaign since 2001. We could only provide details regarding contracts awarded to advertising agencies prior to 2001 at disproportionate cost. This is because we have no centrally held records relating to the awarding of such contracts.

There have been no contracts awarded to public relations agencies.

National Benefit Fraud Hotline advertising costs from 1996 to 2001 are in the following table.

National Benefit Fraud Hotline advertising costs

	£
1996–97	476,000
1997–98	225,000
1998–99	290,247
1999–2000	337,672
2000–01	425,178

Incapacity Benefit

Roger Berry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many incapacity benefit claimants there have been in each year since 2001, broken down by region and diagnosis. [15035]

Margaret Hodge: The information has been placed in the Library.

Jobseeker's Allowance

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate, how many *(a)* adults and *(b)* adults aged (i) 16 to 24, (ii) 25 to 49, (iii) 50 to 55, (iv) 55 to 59 and (v) over 60 years made a claim for jobseeker's allowance in the last year for which figures are available; and of these how many (A) left the benefit within six months, (B) left the benefit within six months and claimed another benefit, (C) left the benefit within

six months and returned to work and (D) left the benefit within six months, returned to work, but claimed another benefit within a year. [15197]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available in the form requested. The available information is in the following table. The figures in the table refer to the number of awards of jobseeker's allowance. Claimants can flow on and off benefit more than once, therefore it is not possible to calculate the number of people flowing onto jobseeker's allowance within a year.

Jobseeker's allowance new awards by age of claimant in Great Britain: July 2004 to June 2005

	Number
All ages	2,389,140
16–24	932,460
25–49	1,152,425
50–54	147,635
55–59	130,825
60 and over	25,790

Notes:
1. Figures are based on 100 per cent. claimant count, and are rounded to the nearest 5.
2. Figures refer to number of awards and not people flowing onto jobseeker's allowance.
3. Claimants can flow on and off benefit more than once.
4. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Source:
Count of unemployment-related benefits, Jobcentre Plus computer systems (computer held cases only).

Pathways to Work

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many existing recipients of incapacity benefit have attended a work focused interview through the Pathways to Work pilots since February; and how many have received the job preparation premium. [14336]

Margaret Hodge: As part of the extension of Pathways to Work to existing customers, 6,200 existing recipients of incapacity benefit have attended a mandatory work focused interview (WFI) between 7 February 2005 and the end of June 2005.

Participants have access to an extensive menu of support and back to work help. Between 7 February and the end of June 26 job preparation premium (JPP) awards were made.

Tax Credits

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of households in receipt of tax credit awards were receiving less money than their actual weekly entitlement due to an in-year adjustment to their awards or payments on 31 January; and what percentage of households receiving less money than their actual entitlement were households on maximum tax credit receiving less than 30 per cent. of their weekly tax credit entitlement. [16581]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested is not available.

Tax credit awards can be adjusted during the year to take account of a change in circumstances or income. Where the amount payable is reduced, payments are adjusted with the aim of paying out the right amount for the year as a whole. This is explained in HMRC's Code of Practice 26 "What happens if we have paid you too much tax credit?", which is accessible at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/leaflets/cop26.htm. This is part of the normal operation of the tax credit system, and no count of such occurrences is maintained.

Wareham Job Centre

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what reasons it is proposed to reduce the opening times of the Wareham Job Centre to two days a week. [15934]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 10 October 2005]:* The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Acting Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie to Annette Brooke, dated 11 October 2005:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning the proposed reduction in opening hours for Wareham Jobcentre. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Acting Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

We have recently reviewed the way in which we deliver our services from our Jobcentre Plus offices and we are proposing that some of our smaller sites will be open for the number of days most appropriate to meeting the needs of our customers. Some of our offices have become too small to support all of the specialist advisory services which we will provide to those who need most assistance in entering employment. Wareham Jobcentre is one of those offices involved in the review.

We propose to deliver many of these services from nearby larger Jobcentre Plus offices together with improved access to our services through telephone and e-channels. We will, however, continue to deliver job search activity for jobseekers and some tailored advisory support to individuals from smaller offices such as Wareham, after the change in opening times.

Further proposals are under consideration with regard to opening on additional days, if this is considered necessary, to offer a targeted service to our most disadvantaged customers. This would be in addition to the days the office would normally be open, to meet the needs of our customers already actively seeking employment. This proposal is in the early stages of being considered and no decision has yet been made. The Jobcentre Plus District Manager for Dorset and Somerset, will inform you once a decision has been reached.

You have my assurance that it is our intention to continue to provide our customers with a service designed to target their needs. These changes will allow us to improve upon the services which we provide.

I hope this is helpful.

HEALTH

Anti-psychotic Drugs

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 11 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 716W, on anti-psychotic drugs, if she will break down each category by those aged *(a)* 50 to 64, *(b)* 65 to 74, *(c)* 75 years and over. [15548]

Jane Kennedy: Table one shows the total number of suspected adverse drug reaction (ADR) reports received via the yellow card scheme from 1 January to 31 December for each of the last five years, for all anti-psychotic drugs, traditional anti-psychotics and atypical anti-psychotics.

Tables two and three show a breakdown by age groups 50 to 64, 65 to 74 and 75 years and over for traditional and atypical anti-psychotics respectively.

Table 1: Reports received via the yellow card scheme for anti-psychotics

	Number of reports for:		
	All anti-psychotics	*Traditional anti-psychotics*	*Atypical anti-psychotics*
2000	1,000	100	913
2001	1,189	105	1,097
2002	1,395	90	1,316
2003	1,774	115	1,680
2004	2,004	78	1,933

Table 2: Traditional anti-psychotics

	50–64 years	*65–74 years*	*75 and over*
2000	11	13	12
2001	20	14	13
2002	16	10	12
2003	21	16	19
2004	13	11	7

Table 3: Atypical anti-psychotics

	50–64 years	*65–74 years*	*75 and over*
2000	150	50	47
2001	226	51	61
2002	219	59	66
2003	311	75	84
2004	328	68	73

Note:
The sum of reports for traditional and atypical anti-psychotics do not equal the number of reports for all anti-psychotics as some reports have more than one suspected anti-psychotic drug.

Age was not provided in 14 per cent.—68 reports—for traditional anti-psychotics and 5 per cent.—348 reports—for atypical anti-psychotics.

It is important to note that a report of an adverse drug reaction does not necessarily mean that it was caused by the drug. Many factors have to be taken into account in assessing causal relationships including temporal association, the possible contribution of concomitant medication and the underlying disease.

Children in Care (Costs)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average annual cost to public funds of maintaining a child in care has been in each of the last six years for which figures are available. [14268]

Maria Eagle: I have been asked to reply.

The average gross annual expenditure per looked after child (average includes those in foster care and those in children's homes) in England for the latest available six years is as follows:

	£
1998–99	[1]19,920
1999–2000	21,270
2000–01	26,100
2001–02	25,300
2002–03	29,100
2003–04	32,100

[1] Figures above and below the blank row in the table are not calculated on the same basis. From 2000–01, the unit cost includes capital charges and management and support costs. These costs were excluded prior to that date. The categories of service included in the cost also changed from 2000–01—the main change being the inclusion of social services expenditure on boarding schools. From 2000–01, the unit cost also takes into account nights spent in boarding schools, placed for adoption and respite nights.

Source:
Prior to 2000–01 form KS1, and for 2000–01 onwards form PSS EX1.

Chiron

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what products Chiron supplies to the NHS. [16344]

Jane Kennedy: Chiron has three divisions, which supply the following products to the national health service:

Chiron Vaccines

Flu vaccine

Rabies vaccine

Cholera vaccine

Diamorphine injection

Chiron Biopharmaceuticals

Tobi (300 milligrams/5 millilitres tobramycin nebulised solution)

Proleukin (Aldesleukin/ IL-2)

Chiron Blood Testing

Procleix HIV-1/HCV Assay.

Diagnostic Scans

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which *(a)* primary care trusts, *(b)* hospital trusts and *(c)* strategic health authorities made representations to her Department about the impact of Alliance Medical providing diagnostic scanning services in the NHS on the utilization of existing diagnostic scanning capacity within the NHS. [11886]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 12 July 2005]:* This information could be provided only at disproportionate cost, as the Department has many routine operational discussions with the national health service relating to these services.

GP Appointments

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have *(a)* requested and *(b)* received an appointment to see a general practitioner within 48 hours in (i) the parliamentary constituency of Mid-Bedfordshire and (ii) the County of Bedfordshire in each year since 2000. [16628]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not collected in the format requested and the information that is collected centrally cannot be disaggregated to practices as each practice is anonymised within the primary care access survey.

The latest information available, September 2005, shows that 100 per cent. of patients were offered a general practitioner consultation within two working days in each of the three primary care trusts that cover Bedfordshire (Bedford, Luton and Bedfordshire and Hertlands).

Prostate Cancer

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with the Healthcare Commission on the waiting time targets for prostate cancer patients. [15709]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 10 October 2005]:* I have had no discussions with the Healthcare Commission on the waiting times targets for prostate cancer. The national health service cancer plan sets out our strategy to reduce waiting times for cancer patients. There are two targets for cancer patients to be achieved from the end of December 2005, of a maximum 31 day wait from diagnosis of cancer to start of treatment and 62 days from urgent referral for suspected cancer to first treatment. Prostate cancer patients fall within these groups. Achievement of these targets will form part of the Healthcare Commission's assessment of existing targets for 2005–06.

Recycling

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what percentage of paper for printed publications used by the Department in 2003–04 and 2004–05 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained; [15460]

(2) what measures she has put in place to ensure that her Department meets the targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all copying paper for printed publications brought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [15462]

Jane Kennedy: For parliamentary work carried out by the Central Office of Information (COI), for example Command Papers, Acts and other departmental papers, the minimum recycled fibre content required is 75 per cent. for coated and 100 per cent. for uncoated papers, virgin fibre pulp being elemental chlorine free or preferably totally chlorine free. Mill broke is not included in the recycled fibre content. Applying the National Association of Paper Merchants definition for recycled content, the recycled fibre can include converter's waste, printer's waste and post consumer waste from homes and offices.

For all other printed publications produced in 2003–04 and 2004–05, the Department has no central record of paper source and content, and could not obtain these without incurring disproportionate cost. However, the selection of paper stock and its recycled and environmental properties currently rests with the COI.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 12 October 2005

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

European Contractors

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list contractors based in other EU member states that are providing services to her Department. [15450]

Jim Knight: The information requested can be provided only at disproportionate cost. The Department would need to divert significant resources from day to day operational matters to compare the invoice and billing addresses on its financial systems of those companies with whom it trades, with the registered trading addresses of those companies held at Companies House and then, determine whether any contractors had their primary headquarters based in other EU states.

Farming

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage contribution farming made to the English gross domestic product *(a)* before and *(b)* after deduction for subsidies in each of the last three years. [16485]

Jim Knight: Farming's contribution to the economy is measured by its contribution to Gross Value Added (GVA).

The following table shows the percentage proportion that agriculture made to GVA for England for the years 2001 to 2003, which are the latest available.

Percentage

	GVA for England including production linked subsidies	*GVA for England at market prices (excluding subsidies)*
2001	0.68	0.52
2002	0.70	0.52
2003	0.74	0.57

The subsidies included (and excluded) here are those that were linked to production, such as the Arable Area Payment Scheme and Sheep Annual Premium Scheme. Payments made to farmers through, for example, agri-environment schemes, which are not linked to production, do not contribute to GVA and are not included in these figures.

The increase in the percentage proportion from 2001 will in part reflect a recovery from the outbreak of foot and mouth disease.

Fisheries

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list state aid for national fishing fleets of each EU member state since 1997. [16846]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department does not hold information on state aids provided by each EU member state to its fishing fleets. We understand that the EU Commission may hold such information.

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many vessels from countries which joined the EU in 2004 fished within the UK's 200 mile/median line limit in the latest period for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [16847]

Mr. Bradshaw: The information as requested is not readily available, and as such what information is available is given as follows.

On joining the EU, the new member states only received very limited allocations of quotas related to any fish stocks involving the waters within British fishery limits. Based on the information reported by these new and the existing member states on the activity by the new member states vessels in 2004, no reported catches of quota stocks involving the areas covered by British fishery limits took place. UK fisheries Departments have details related to activity by such vessels when it results in landings of fish at a UK port. For 2004, these show that while there were landings by some Polish vessels into the UK, they did not involve any activity within British fishery limits.

Information is available from the UK fishing vessel monitoring system, which records observations of UK and fishing vessels registered in other countries while present within British fishery limits. These observations are based on satellite monitoring information for larger vessels and also aerial and naval sightings of vessels. The satellite reporting system does not cover the full fleets of the member states in question, but does cover the larger vessels that are more likely to make the journeys required to fish in UK waters. Similarly the system records the location of vessels but not if they were actually fishing at the time of the report. Based on the overall vessel monitoring reports available, since the accession of the new member states on 1 May 2004, there have been only three vessels from the new member states observed as present within British fishery limits—one each from Estonia, Lithuania and Poland.

Hazardous Waste Regulations

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what assessment she has made of the effects of the hazardous waste regulations on the construction industry; [14999]

(2) what the definition of occupy is for the purposes of the hazardous waste regulations, with regard to the mobile services tenure restriction for exemption from notification to the Environment Agency; [15000]

(3) whether construction contractors are considered for the purposes of the hazardous waste regulations to occupy the premises on which they work; [15001]

(4) whether the number of registrations anticipated by the Environment Agency as a result of the hazardous waste regulations includes construction sites. [15002]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Environment Agency are responsible for enforcing the new regulations and it has confirmed that, in some circumstances, it will consider sub-contractors working at construction sites to be mobile service operators. The agency would normally expect a construction company producing hazardous waste at a construction site to notify those premises. However, where a producer is genuinely carrying out a mobile service at a site, such as a painter and decorator, the mobile service provisions would apply as long as that person produces less than 200kg at those premises in any period of 12 months.

As far as the tenure restriction (i.e. that the operator of the mobile service neither owns nor occupies those related premises) is concerned, the interpretation of the regulations is ultimately a matter for the courts. The term "occupies" is not defined in the regulations and it will therefore carry its ordinary meaning. In the Government's view, it would normally refer to the person in occupation and in many cases that will be the tenant or licensee of the premises. The effect would be that any contractor who is a tenant or a licensee would not satisfy the mobile service tenure restriction and would need to notify the premises. However, a sub-contractor attending a site to carry out a specific task (without occupying the site) would be able to operate under the mobile service provisions as long as they produced less than 200kg of hazardous waste at that site in any period of twelve months.

The final regulatory impact assessment which assessed the impact of the regulations on a range of businesses and industry notes that the Environment Agency estimated that there would be 110,000 notified sites in year one. This estimate is based in part on the number of sites producing and consigning special waste under the previous regime. In so far as construction sites consigned special waste under the special waste regime, they will be included in the estimate of notifications under the hazardous waste regulations.

Rivers

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to improve public access to rivers in England; and if she will make a statement. [17458]

Jim Knight: Defra has put in place a number of measures to increase opportunities for water-based recreation. These include:

commissioning the Countryside Agency to work in partnership with other Government agencies to pilot demonstration projects to develop best practice for access agreements for canoeists on key stretches of water in England;

implementing the findings of this feasibility study by asking the Environment Agency to complete agreements in the four pilot areas; and

agreeing to the development of a strategic approach to recreational access to inland waters, led by the Environment Agency but in collaboration with other key stakeholders including local access forums.

All of this work has been underpinned by extensive discussions with the Countryside Agency, Environment Agency, Sport England, and the British Canoe Union.

Responsibility for promoting recreation in Wales, including access to rivers, lies with the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government rather than with Defra.

Toxic Waste

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much toxic waste was transported through Hemel Hempstead constituency from and to other locations in the last year for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [16715]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Environment Agency's hazardous waste data system on the movement of hazardous waste within England and Wales, which is based on statutory powers, does not record the route or method of transport used.

Separate controls apply to the import and export of hazardous waste from the UK. These controls provide some route details but do not provide a level of detail to establish what, if any, shipments pass through the Hemel Hempstead constituency.

Whaling

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many countries allow the hunting of whales; and how many whales were killed in 2004–05, broken down by species. [7660]

Mr. Bradshaw: Seven countries are currently involved in whaling operations. Of these, Norway carries out commercial whaling under objection to the International Whaling Commission Moratorium. Japan and Iceland take whales under special permit (so called "scientific" whaling) and the remaining four countries are involved in aboriginal subsistence whaling.

Aboriginal whaling is not affected by the moratorium on commercial whaling and is permitted under IWC rules from Denmark (Greenland, fin and minke whales), the Russian Federation (Siberia, gray whales), St. Vincent and the Grenadines (humpback whales), and the USA (Alaska, bowhead and occasionally off Washington State, gray whales).

In 2004–05 13 fin, one humpback, 1,368 minke, three sperm, 44 bowhead, 11 gray, 100 sei and 51 brydes were killed, as reported to the International Whaling Commission.

TRANSPORT

Crossrail

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what studies his Department has undertaken on the impact of Crossrail construction on building stability in the Spitalfields area. [15918]

Derek Twigg: The Crossrail environmental statement (ES) and its accompanying technical reports published in February 2005 contained an assessment of potential settlement along the route.

Analysis of settlement is an ongoing activity that will be reviewed and updated as the detailed design of the project is developed. Further assessments will be undertaken for buildings within the zone potentially affected by settlement. Where significant settlement is expected to occur, measures will be taken to mitigate the effects.

Details of the assessment process, surveys, monitoring, protection and remedial work is outlined in the Crossrail policy on Ground Settlement published in February 2005. The policy document, the ES and the technical reports have all been published and can be found atwww.crossrail.co.uk.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Sudan

5. **Mr. Goodwill:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the humanitarian situation in Sudan. [16767]

Hilary Benn: 1.8 million people have been forced to flee their homes in Darfur and just under 3.5 million are now dependent on humanitarian assistance. Although the latest UN mortality survey shows that the number of deaths has decreased significantly since last year, banditry and the recent increase in violence are a cause of considerable concern.

In Southern Sudan malnutrition levels are in places, as bad as in Darfur. The situation should improve after the anticipated good harvest, but there will still be areas where food is insufficient. People are now returning home to the South, but the humanitarian and development needs there are enormous.

Millennium Development Goals

9. **Chris McCafferty:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what progress was made at the UN World Summit towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. [16771]

Hilary Benn: The outcome document agreed at the World summit in September consolidates all the achievements on development of the G8 summit at Gleneagles in July. For the first time, there was an unambiguous commitment by the UN's 191 member states to accelerate progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), acknowledging the special needs of Africa. The need for urgency is underlined. Reflecting the Gleneagles communiqué on Africa, the Document reaffirms the central principle that developing countries must take primary responsibility for their own development. It also welcomes the commitments of the G8 and EU to increase and improve development assistance to contribute to achievement of the MDGs.

11. **Barbara Follett:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what measures he is taking to ensure that the Millennium Development Goals to promote gender equality and empower women in the developing world by 2015 are met. [16773]

Mr. Thomas: Eliminating gender inequality and promoting women's empowerment are essential to the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). DFID's strategy for promoting gender equality is set out in the document "Poverty Elimination and the Empowerment of Women", available on DFID's website. DFID also supports specific activities to promote the rights of women and girls, including in the areas of girls' education, maternal mortality and reproductive health.

Niger

10. **Mr. Laurence Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the humanitarian situation in Niger. [16772]

Hilary Benn: I refer the hon. Member to my statement of 11 October 2005, *Official* Report, column 26WS, on the food crisis in Niger.

Mr. Mark Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when he was first informed of the gravity of the famine in Niger; and if he will make a statement. [16775]

Hilary Benn: DFID has been following events in the Sahel, including Niger, since the locust invasion of last year. We made our first contribution to the humanitarian effort in June of this year when NGO surveys made it clear that emergency feeding programmes and nutritional therapy for malnourished children were required. My statement to Parliament on the food crisis in Niger of 11 October provides the details of our response.

G8 Summit (Gleneagles)

12. **Mark Lazarowicz:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what progress he is making in implementing the agreements on aid and debt reached at the G8 summit at Gleneagles. [16774]

Hilary Benn: At the UN World summit, the EU statement confirmed that a group of willing countries would implement the international finance facility (IFF) as a component of the EU development financing package consisting also of the new EU oda/GNI target, debt relief and an air ticket levy. On the G8 proposal for 100 per cent. debt stock cancellation, the International Development Association (IDA) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) components of this were agreed by the annual meetings of the World Bank and IMF, and the approval process is under way in the African Development Bank. Progress continues on full implementation and financing of the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) initiative. As a result of the extended HIPC sunset clause for which the UK lobbied, more countries are likely to become eligible for debt relief.

Sub-Saharan Africa

14. **Mr. Tom Clarke:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department has spent on aid for sub-Saharan Africa in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [16776]

Hilary Benn: Total DFID bilateral aid to sub-Saharan Africa in each of the last five years has been as follows. DFID provided £626 million in 2000–01; £533 million in 2001–02; £700 million in 2002–03; £672 million in 2003–04; and £825 million in 2004–05. Figures for 2004–05 are provisional pending the publication of Statistics on International Development 2005 later this month.

DFID will provide over £1 billion bilateral aid to sub-Saharan Africa during 2005–06.

Colombia

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to ensure that aid and assistance given to the Colombian Government is used for the purposes for which it is intended. [16770]

Mr. Thomas: DFID does not provide money directly to the Colombian Government, but does so through its contributions to the European Commission, the Inter America Development Bank and the World Bank. DFID reviews their project proposals through its participation in the bank boards and relevant EC committee. All these institutions have monitoring systems to ensure appropriate use of the aid. We also provide assistance to British NGOs in Colombia to enable them to support local civil society organisations.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Mr. Joyce: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what support has been offered to *(a)* the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and *(b)* the United Nations Mission to the Congo to increase the effectiveness of (i) border and customs controls and (ii) airspace monitoring. [16015]

Hilary Benn: At the request of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) transitional Government in 2004, DFID facilitated a review of the DRC's customs operations by Crown Agents UK. This year, the DRC Government has indicated a willingness to follow up the report in terms of improved border and customs controls. DFID is considering supporting this. We are also considering further options for DFID's engagement in this area, for example through supporting the French and EC on the development of a customs reform programme focused on border points in Katanga and Ituri.

We have encouraged the Mission des Nations Unies au Congo (MONUC) to increase border and airspace monitoring as far as their resources allow given current priorities for MONUC action (supporting the elections, and tackling the Front Democratique pour la Liberation du Rwanda (FDLR) in the east and other armed groups in Ituri). The UK's contribution to MONUC through UN assessed contributions in 2005 is estimated to be £48 million, as well as six personnel in key positions. We have regularly lobbied at the UN Security Council for an increase in MONUC's capacity, particularly in the run up to the elections.

India

Mr. MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much UK aid has been given to India in each year since 2000. [16766]

Mr. Thomas: UK development assistance to India has been rising steadily since 2000, in response to the scale of the poverty challenge and the positive environment for poverty reduction and development.

Gross UK development assistance to India (including aid from other UK official sources) in each of the last five financial years was:

£ million

	Gross UK assistance to India
2000–01	125.5
2001–02	199.2
2002–03	183.5
2003–04	244
2004–05	269.3

West Africa

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the effects of locust plagues in West Africa; and what steps his Department has taken to tackle problems caused by locusts in West Africa. [16853]

Hilary Benn: DFID has not made its own assessment of the 2004 locust infestation, but an independent review of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) regional control operation is being planned and will include an assessment of the appropriateness of the technical response, which will be important for the preparation of future campaigns. DFID provided £1.5 million to the operation, which covered Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Chad.

Fortunately, cold weather in North Africa earlier this year has helped to diminish breeding capacity so there has not been a repeat of the large swarms seen in 2004, but we will of course, continue to monitor the situation carefully. The FAO recently stated that the risk in the Sahel this year is low.

In Southern Africa and the Horn, DFID is pioneering longer-term safety net programmes as a means of combating structural, predictable hunger. We hope that the lessons emerging from these experiences can provide pointers to steps that could be taken in West Africa by Governments and development donors.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

India

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she expects a film co-operation agreement with India will be agreed. [16951]

James Purnell: We have secured agreement on the text of the main body of the film co-production agreement with India, and I hope to sign this at the next appropriate opportunity. Further, more detailed, provisions will then have to be agreed, signed and ratified before the agreement can be brought into force; we aim to have this completed in spring 2006.

National Lottery

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what projects based in the London borough of Brent have received National Lottery funding; and how much was received in the last 12 months. [16023]

Mr. Caborn: In the borough of Brent there have been 574 Lottery awards made to recipients, some of whom received multiple awards. In 2004, 74 awards, worth a total of £5.9 million, were made in Brent. A list, which has been placed in the Library, has been derived from the Department's Lottery award database, which is searchable at www.lottery.culture.gsi.gov.uk, which uses data supplied by the Lottery distributors.

TREASURY

Betting Exchanges

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will announce the results of the review of the tax treatment of betting exchanges announced in his Budget of March 2004; and if he will make a statement; [15817]

(2) what the terms of reference are for the review of the tax treatment of betting exchanges announced in his Budget of March 2004; and if he will make a statement. [15818]

John Healey: As set out in the Economic and Fiscal Strategy Report published at Budget 2004, we are committed to settling a fair and equitable tax treatment for betting exchanges and their clients and we are working in close consultation with the betting industry. Any further announcements will be made in due course in accordance with the normal Budget process.

Income Growth

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average income of each decile of earnings has been in each year since 1996–97; and what the real terms annual growth in income of each decile was between 1996–97 and the latest date for which this information is available. [16358]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Michael Meacher, dated 12 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what the average income of each decile of earnings has been in each year since 1996–97; and what the real terms annual growth in income of each decile was between 1996–97 and the latest date for which this information is available. (16358)

Currently average earnings are estimated from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE). Prior to 1998 average earnings were estimated from the New Earnings Survey (NES), and are provided for full time employees on adult rates of pay whose pay was unaffected by absence during the pay period. This is the standard definition used for ASHE and NES tables. The ASHE does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

Table 1 attached below contains statistics on earnings from the NES from 1986—1998 and from ASHE for the years 1998—2004. In table 2, the figures from table 1 are expressed in 2004 prices by uprating with the Retail Price Index (RPI).

The ASHE, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the United Kingdom. It is a one per cent sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes, but because of its sampling frame, it has difficulty capturing data on people with very low pay. It is therefore likely to under-represent relatively low paid staff earning below the tax threshold.

Table 1: Weekly pay for full-time employee jobs[1]: United Kingdom, 1996 to 2004

Gross (£)

	Percentiles								
Description	*10*	*20*	*30*	*40*	*50*	*60*	*70*	*80*	*90*
1996[2]	166	201	232	265	300	341	391	453	568
1997[2]	175	211	243	277	314	357	408	473	588
1998[2]	181	219	253	288	326	372	423	494	619
1998[3]	181	220	256	293	335	382	435	507	636
1999[3]	189	230	267	305	346	395	451	525	661
2000[3]	196	238	276	315	359	410	468	544	685
2001[3]	205	248	288	330	376	430	492	576	731
2002[3]	214	259	299	344	391	447	513	599	768
2003[3]	223	268	309	354	404	462	531	621	794
2004[3, 4]	232	279	324	370	423	483	555	649	829

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.

[2] 1996–98 are estimates supplied from NES.

[3] 1998–2004 are estimates supplied from ASHE.

[4] Figures for 2004 exclude supplementary surveys.

Source:

New Earnings Survey, ONS and Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, ONS.

Table 2: Weekly pay for full-time employee jobs[1]: United Kingdom, 1996 to 2004

Gross (£)

	Percentiles								
Description	*10*	*20*	*30*	*40*	*50*	*60*	*70*	*80*	*90*
1996[2]	202	245	282	322	365	415	475	551	691
1997[2]	207	251	289	329	373	424	484	562	698
1998[2]	207	250	288	329	373	425	483	565	707
1998[3]	206	251	293	335	382	436	497	579	726
1999[3]	213	259	300	343	388	444	507	590	742
2000[3]	214	260	301	344	392	447	511	594	748
2001[3]	220	266	309	354	403	461	528	618	784
2002[3]	227	273	316	363	413	472	542	633	811
2003[3]	228	275	317	363	414	474	544	636	814
2004[3, 4]	232	279	324	370	423	483	555	649	829
Growth Rate percentage[5]	14.9	12.9	13.0	12.5	12.7	12.9	13.4	14.6	16.5

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.
[2] 1996–98 are estimates supplied using NES uprated using RPI.
[3] 1998–2004 are estimates supplied using ASHE uprated using RPI.
[4] Figures for 2004 exclude supplementary surveys.
[5] Growth rates have been calculated between 1996 and 1998 and between 1998 and 2004, and the sum of these two used.
Source:
New Earnings Survey, ONS and Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, ONS.

Tax-free Limit

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what stage his application to the European Commission to increase the tax-free limit on goods brought into the UK from outside the European Union has reached. [17022]

Dawn Primarolo: The European Commission has expressed support in principle for the Government's proposal that the limit on goods (excluding wine, spirits, tobacco and perfume) brought into the EU without incurring tax or duty on arrival should be raised. We hope the Commission will soon come forward with draft legislation addressing our request and reducing unnecessary restrictions on travellers bringing goods into the EU for their own use.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Building Regulations

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the timetable for amending Part G of building regulations for regulating the temperature of bathing water in residential homes; and if he will make a statement. [4310]

Yvette Cooper: The review of Part G of the Building Regulations is in progress and it is expected that a consultation document will be published next year.

Methods for regulating the temperature of bathing water in residential care homes are already the subject of the Care Homes Regulations 2001.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what changes the Government have made to building regulations in England since 1997; and if he will publish the regulatory impact assessments accompanying those changes to the regulations. [17395]

Yvette Cooper: Consolidated building regulations were issued in 2000 as the Building Regulations 2000 (SI 2000/2531). All earlier Building Regulations were revoked in their entirety. Since that time the following amendments have been made to these Regulations:

The Building (Amendment) Regulations 2001 (SI 2001/3335)

The Building (Amendment) Regulations 2002 (SI 2002/0440)

The Building (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2002 (SI 2002/2871)

The Building (Amendment) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/2692)

The Building (Amendment) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/1465)

The Building (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2004 (SI2004/1808)

The Building (Amendment) (No.3) Regulations 2004 (SI2004/3210).

Prior to the issue of the Building Regulations 2000, the principal regulations were the Building Regulations 1991. Amendments to them since 1997 were as follows:

The Building Regulations (Amendment) Regulations 1997 (SI 1997/1904)

The Building Regulations (Amendment) Regulations 1998 (SI 1998/2561)

The Building Regulations (Amendment) Regulations 1999 (SI 199977)

The Building Regulations (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations 1999 (SI1999/3410)

The Building Regulations (Amendment) Regulations 2000 (SI 2000/1554).

Regulatory Impact Assessments for those changes where such assessments were required were approved in line with guidance current at the time and are all available in the building regulations section of the ODPM website:

www.odpm.gov.uk

Many of the changes to the Regulations were of a technical or legal nature, not requiring such assessments.

Green Belt

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the locations of each development on green belt land for which he or his predecessors have *(a)* refused and *(b)* given planning permission since 1 May 1997. [15239]

Yvette Cooper: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 11 October 2005 (ref. 4289), *Official Report*, c. 440W.

Gypsies and Travellers

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the *(a)* documents and *(b)* guidance that the Department and its predecessors has published relating to Gypsies and Travellers since 1997. [17400]

Yvette Cooper: The documents and guidance which have been published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and its predecessors since 1997 concerning Gypsies and Travellers are summarised as follows:

Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count figures are published by the Department every six months. The most recently published Count returns includes data collected by local authorities in January 2005.

On the Gypsy Sites Refurbishment Grant (GSRG), bidding guidance and the determinations of winning bids have been published annually since the inception of the grant scheme in 2001, with the successful bids for the last round of funding being announced in July 2005.

Other individual publications which have been produced since 1997 in the Gypsy and Traveller policy area are:

"DETR Research Project—Local Authority Powers for Tackling Unauthorised Camping", published October 1997;

"Guidelines for Residential Caravan Parks for Travellers", published October 1997; "Local Authority Powers for Managing Unauthorised Camping—Research Report", published October 1998;

"Managing Unauthorised Camping—A Good Practice Guide", published October 1998;

"Monitoring the Good Practice Guidance on Managing Unauthorised Camping", published October 2001;

"The Provision and Condition of Local Authority Gypsy/Traveller Sites in England", report and summary document published October 2002;

"Managing Unauthorised Camping—Operational Guidance—A Consultation Paper", published April 2003;

"Counting Gypsies and Travellers—A Review of the Gypsy Caravan Count System", published January 2004;

"Guidance on Managing Unauthorised Encampments", published March 2004;

"Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Sites—Consultation Paper", published December 2004;

"Housing Act Fact Sheet 16—Gypsies and Travellers", published December 2004;

"Government Response to the ODPM Select Committee's Report on Gypsy and Traveller Sites", published January 2005;

"Guidance on Managing Unauthorised Encampments" supplementary document, published March 2005; and

"ODPM Circular 02/2005—Temporary Stop Notice", published March 2005.

Gypsy and Traveller issues are also touched on in other documents produced by the Department, however, these are focused on wider policy areas, such as community cohesion and race equality.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what advice the Government have given to local authorities on the provision of services to residents in unauthorised Traveller sites. [17198]

Yvette Cooper: The joint ODPM/Home Office document, "Guidance on Managing Unauthorised Encampments", provides comprehensive advice to local authorities, the police and other landowners on how such incidents should be dealt with, including the question of providing services to unauthorised campers.

Planning Delivery Grant

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total expenditure was on Planning Delivery Grant in each year since its inception; and what the planned level is for *(a)* the forthcoming financial year and *(b)* future financial years for which figures are available. [17224]

Yvette Cooper: The total expenditure on Planning Delivery Grant in each of the years since its inception, and the planned level for which future figures are available, is set out in the table.

	£ million
2003–04	50
2004–05	130
2005–06	170
2006–07	135
2007–08	120

HOME DEPARTMENT

Community Support Officers

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police community support officers there are in Southend; what plans there are to change these numbers; and if he will make a statement. [16596]

Hazel Blears: Information provided by Essex police shows that on 30 June 2005 there were 23 community support officers (CSOs) in the H (Southend) Division . I am told that the Essex police has plans for CSO numbers to grow to around 200 by 31 March 2006. The deployment of CSOs to the territorial divisions of the Essex police is a matter for the chief constable (Mr. Roger Baker).

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will commission research to assess the effectiveness of community support officers. [16726]

Hazel Blears: The Home Office research and development section were commissioned to conduct a national evaluation of community support officers in 2004. The report examines the impact community support officers are having in their communities and looks at issues that impact on their effectiveness. An interim report of the evaluation was published in December 2004 and is available on the Home Office website. The final report is due to be published in December 2005.

Correspondence

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his Department's policy is for dealing with and responding to correspondence received in *(a)* Welsh, *(b)* Scots Gaelic and *(c)* Irish Gaelic. [14732]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Department arranges for any item of correspondence that is written in a language other than English to be translated. If the correspondent has written exclusively in Welsh a reply in Welsh will be provided within the usual time limits, in line with the Department's and agencies' Welsh Language schemes. In all other cases the reply will be provided in English.

Criminal Justice Council

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will make a statement on the work of the Criminal Justice Council; [16473]

(2) what the Criminal Justice Council's responsibilities are. [16468]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Criminal Justice Council is chaired by the President of the Queen's Bench Division, the right hon. Sir Igor Judge. A full membership list is shown in the table. It held its first meeting in May 2003. It meets quarterly, and the next meeting will be held in October 2005.

The Council discusses issues and initiatives of current interest across the Criminal Justice System. A full description of its responsibilities is contained in the terms of reference in annexe B.

A protocol of its relationship to the National Criminal Justice Board is shown in annexe C.

Annexe A: Criminal Justice Council Members

Name	*Title/Department*
The right hon. Sir Igor Judge	Chairman
Dr. Jeremy Horder	Law Commission
HHJ Globe QC	Circuit Judge
Sir Duncan Nichol	Chairman—Parole Board
Dame Helen Reeves DBE	Chief Executive—Victim Support
Judge Davinder Lachhar	District Judge—West London Magistrate
George Mitchell CBE JP	Solicitor—Law Society
Rodney Warren	Barrister—Bar Council
Nicholas Purnell QC	Special Casework Projects Manager, Casework Directorate, Crown Prosecution Service
Withiel Cole	School of Law, University of Nottingham
Professor Di Birch	Institute of Local Government Studies, University of Birmingham
Professor John Raine	Commission for Racial Equality
Claire Cooper	Justices' Clerks' Society
Neil Clarke	Acting Director—Criminal Defence Service
Richard Collins	Chief Executive—NACRO
Paul Cavadino	Director of Education and Social Policy—Local Government Association
John Ransford	Chair—The NHS Confederation
Dianne Jeffrey	Association of Directors of Social Services
John Dixon	Director—Crime Reduction Unit, National Assembly of Wales
David A'Herne	Chair—Criminal Cases Review Commission
Professor Graham Zellick	Chief Executive—DrugScope
Vlartin Barnes	Chief Executive—Crime Concern
Roger Howard	

Secretariat:

Shena Clarke shena.clarke@cjs.gsi.gov.uk / 020 7035 8528

Annexe B: Criminal Justice Council—terms of reference

To keep the criminal justice system under review

To advise the Government on the form and manner of implementation of criminal justice reforms and to make proposals to it for reform

To advise on the framing and implementation of a communication and education strategy for the criminal justice system

Annexe C: Protocol between the national criminal justice board and the criminal justice council

1. The CJC will keep the Criminal Justice System under review and will act in the capacity of an expert advisor to the NCJB, providing advice and guidance on the full range of criminal justice issues. The NCJB may seek the views of the CJC on specific issues.

2. Policy on criminal justice reform is the responsibility of the NCJB. The NCJB will take account of the experience and views of the CJC as appropriate.

3. The Chair of the CJC will have a seat on the NCJB.

4. The Council will have a flexible membership. Members need not attend meetings if they have no specific interest in the topic(s) under discussion. If items on the agenda so require, members may nominate an "expert" to attend the Council. In addition, the Council has the right to co-opt agency representation as required and to invite officials from the criminal justice departments to attend to discuss relevant issues.

5. The Council may establish project boards and/or sub-groups as it sees necessary to fulfil its terms of reference.

6. The Council will meet four times per year.

European Enforcement Order

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will make a statement on the responsibility for costs incurred in relation to the European Enforcement Order as set out in 2005/C 150/01 of *Official Journal* C150, vol 48, of 21 June; [16095]

(2) if he will make a statement on the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court in relation to the European Enforcement Order as set out in 2005/C 150/01 of *Official Journal* C150, vol 48, of 21 June, Article 7. [16109]

Fiona Mactaggart: The draft framework decision on the European enforcement order and the transfer of sentenced persons between member states of the European Union is at the early stages of negotiation and is subject to UK parliamentary scrutiny reservation. The draft framework decision is intended to speed up and simplify the existing arrangements for the transfer of prisoners between member states of the EU. It is also intended to facilitate the return of prisoners extradited in accordance with Article 5(3) of the council framework decision of 13 June 2000 on the European Arrest

Warrant, where surrender of own nationals or residents was subject to a condition that the person would be returned in order to serve any sentence imposed.

The draft framework decision on the European enforcement order is intended to replace existing transfer arrangements between member states of the EU. Costs will be borne in the same way as now, in that the executing state will bear all costs except those incurred exclusively in the territory of the issuing state.

The draft framework decision deals exclusively with the transfer of prisoners between member states of the EU. There is no link between the draft framework decision and the International Criminal Court.

Impact Nominal Index

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Impact Nominal Index will form part of the planned national information and intelligence sharing programme, IMPACT. [16477]

Hazel Blears: The IMPACT Nominal Index is the first application that will be delivered by the IMPACT programme. It is planned to introduce the index to the 43 police forces of England and Wales in December 2005.

Independent Monitoring Boards

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many ex-prisoners are members of Independent Monitoring Boards. [16361]

Fiona Mactaggart: This information is not available. Although ex-offenders can apply to become Board members, membership data do not include conviction and custodial history.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department by what criteria former members of Independent Monitoring Boards (IMB) are invited to participate in the IMB Secretariat's Leaving Survey Questionnaire; and if he will make a statement. [16374]

Fiona Mactaggart: Exit questionnaires are sent to all Independent Monitoring Board members who advise the Secretariat that they are resigning from their Board, with the exception of those members who have already informed the Secretariat of the reason for their departure.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many complaints have been made against members of Independent Monitoring Boards (IMB) by *(a)* prison governors, *(b)* prison officers, *(c)* fellow IMB members, *(d)* inmates and *(e)* others in each year since 1997; what the average length of time taken investigating such complaints has been; how many disciplinary actions have been taken, broken down by outcome; what the average cost of such investigations has been; and if he will make a statement. [16377]

Fiona Mactaggart: Records of complaints against members of Independent Monitoring Boards were first collated in 1999 when procedures for handling allegations and/or complaints about conduct were introduced. Full details of complaints dealt with between 1999 and February 2004 are no longer held and while some limited data still exists, an annual breakdown of cases is unavailable.

Of the complaints received since March 2004, most have been dealt with through correspondence and telephone calls; meeting the board; local resolution; or mediation. Only four complaints have required formal investigation. The average length of time taken to investigate these complaints is three and a half months an average cost of £8,000. As yet, disciplinary action has only been taken in one of these cases and the member in question resigned from the board.

Complaint brought by:	*1999 to February 2004*	*March 2004 to October 2005*
Prison Staff[1]	18	13
Fellow IMB members	28	22
Prisoners	1	1
Others	4	—

[1] No differentiation made between prison governors, prison officers and other members of staff in the prison)

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Independent Monitoring Board's secretariat; and if he will make a statement. [16378]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Independent Monitoring Board Secretariat, like all areas of the Home Office, is working to improve the quality and professionalism of the services it provides and the introduction of performance targets and better use of management information within the Secretariat is key to achieving this. The Secretariat is also subject to management supervision over the content of its annual business plan, including setting objectives and reporting on the achievement of those objectives within a given timeframe, and the effectiveness of its overall performance. In addition, the Secretariat is working closely with the National Council of Independent Monitoring Boards to ensure that boards receive the necessary support to enable them to carry out their monitoring role effectively.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the independence of the Independent Monitoring Board's work; and if he will make a statement. [16383]

Fiona Mactaggart: Independent Monitoring Boards have an important role to play as the watchdog of the Secretary of State. As non-departmental public bodies, Independent Monitoring Boards are independent of the Home Office, including prisons. Their individual, voluntary and lay character means that they provide an independent view on the standards of fairness and humanity with which those placed in custody by the courts are treated.

National Offender Management Service

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the business case for the National Offender Management Information System was completed; when a decision is expected on its approval; who will take the decision; and what the timing for implementation of the project is. [10208]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 7 July 2005]:* The full business case for the National Offender Management Information System was completed on 10 June 2005 and approved by the Home Office Group Investment Board on 30 June 2005. Implementation is expected to commence in July 2006 and take up to two years to complete.

Police

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether police officers outside London have operated a shoot-to-kill policy since 1997, with particular reference to armed officers operating in *(a)* Hertfordshire and the *(b)* Hemel Hempstead constituency. [16706]

Hazel Blears: Specialised operational tactics to deal with the threat of deadly attack are operational matters for the police. The tactical options adopted by forces may differ depending on the Chief Officer's assessment of local need.

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to improve retention levels of police officers. [16720]

Hazel Blears: Levels of wastage of police officers from police forces remain low in comparison to other employment. Police forces have a range of pay and other incentives to retain officers in particular posts.

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to increase the amount of time spent by police officers on the beat. [16727]

Hazel Blears: The deployment of officers on the beat and other operational duties is a matter for chief constables. In line with the efficiency strategy for the police service we expect the service to increase time spent on front-line policing to around 72 per cent. by March 2008. This would be a gain equivalent to more than 12,000 extra officers over the next three years.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many full-time equivalent special constables there have been in Bedfordshire Police in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [16614]

Hazel Blears: Figures for Special Constabulary strength are collected from Police forces and published annually in Home Office Statistical Bulletins. As special constables are volunteers and do not have contracted hours, figures are available only on a headcount basis.

The number of specials in Bedfordshire Police since 1997 are shown in the following table:

As at 31 March:	*Number*
1997	182
1998	186
1999	154
2000	151
2001	115
2002	118
2003	98
2004	146
2005	209

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria are to be observed by police forces in respect of the design of officers' uniforms. [16520]

Hazel Blears: The design of police officer uniforms is a matter for individual chief constables and their police authorities. A national advisory specification has been provided to forces by the Association of Chief Police Officers.

Prison Service

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many registered informants there are in the Prison Estate; [16363]

(2) if he will make a statement on informant handling and the use of informers in the Prison Service. [16386]

Fiona Mactaggart: It would compromise the safety, security and well being of both staff and prisoners to publish these figures.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of the work of prison chaplaincy teams; and if he will make a statement. [16364]

Fiona Mactaggart: There has been no recent assessment, nationally, of the work of chaplaincy teams.

Chaplaincy teams play an invaluable role in the life of the prison community. They are involved in a wide range of activities including provision of worship, and religious education, courses on restorative justice, bereavement and family issues. Schemes such as community based chaplaincy draw on the link that chaplains have with their faith communities to provide ongoing practical support and encouragement to help ex offenders resettle into their communities on release. All prisons have multi faith chaplaincy teams to meet the spiritual and pastoral needs of prisoners and staff.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the criteria are for the determination of whether *(a)* a formal and *(b)* an informal investigation is to be undertaken for disciplinary matters within the Prison Service; how many (i) formal and (ii) informal investigations have been undertaken into (A) prison governors, (B) prison officers and (C) other Prison Service staff in each year since 1997, broken down by allegation type; and if he will make a statement. [16365]

Fiona Mactaggart: The seriousness of an incident or the alleged misconduct of a member of staff determines whether an informal or formal investigation is carried out. Formal investigation is recommended in instances where an incident has any major consequences e.g. disorder, damage or injury; where there was serious harm to any person; or where misconduct has occurred which may require formal disciplinary action.

Central records on investigations have been maintained since 2000 but do not include information on whether the investigation was conducted into the actions of a prisoner or a member of staff. Data prior to 2000, or an analysis of only those investigations relating to a member of staff, could be obtained only by

searching records at each establishment, which would incur disproportionate cost. Information on informal investigations is not retained or held centrally.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will list the instances since 2001 when prison governors have been found *(a)* with drugs and *(b)* inappropriately using the internet, and for each indicate (i) how long the investigation lasted, (ii) what disciplinary action was taken and (iii) on what basis the investigation was conducted; [16366]

(2) how many prison *(a)* governors, *(b)* governor/manager grade staff and *(c)* prison officers have been (i) found with or (ii) investigated for drugs at each prison since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [16368]

Fiona Mactaggart: This information is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on staff corruption in the Prison Service. [16384]

Fiona Mactaggart: Her Majesty's Prison Service does not tolerate corruption by its staff and is totally committed to eradicating this wherever it occurs. A professional standards strategy was introduced in February 2003 in order to promote and support a culture that is hostile to corruption. The strategy includes a system that enables the reporting of wrongdoing and provides support for individuals who do so. It also lays out a policy framework and practical advice for gathering information and developing intelligence on staff suspected of wrongdoing. The Prison Service also has in place robust policies setting out how wrongdoing must be investigated and how staff disciplinary matters are to be dealt with.

In order to ensure that these procedures are effective, two comprehensive reviews are currently being undertaken. The first is a review of current arrangements and performance on professional standards issues. The second is a review of the Code of Discipline with particular focus on improving the quality and timeliness of all of the service's investigations. Both reviews are due to report in December 2005.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he plans to publish the Surveillance Commissioners' report into informant handling and the use of informers prepared for the Prison Service in 2005. [16387]

Fiona Mactaggart: No. The Surveillance Commissioner's report is for the information and consideration of the Director General of Her Majesty's Prison Service and is not for publication. The Office of the Surveillance Commissioners supports this approach.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the role of Prison Service area intelligence officers. [16388]

Fiona Mactaggart: The title of Area Intelligence Officer has recently been changed to that of Area Professional Standards Manager (APSM). This more accurately reflects the office holder's role in dealing with prison staff, professional standards and corruption issues. The main role of the APSM is to assist and support local prison establishments, the Area Manager and the Prison Service's Professional Standards Unit with the development of a wide range of staff related inquiries.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many dogs trained to detect drugs are working in prisons. [9013]

Fiona Mactaggart: There are 216 passive search drug dogs and 236 active search drug dogs.

Passive drug detection dogs are specialist trained search dogs which are deployed to screen people for illegal drugs. These dogs do not make contact with the person and give an indication to the handler usually by sitting in front of the person. Active search dogs are used to search areas, such as prisoners' accommodation and work off the lead.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the annual prison statistics for 2004 will be published. [9060]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office statistical bulletin "Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2004' will be published in November 2005. A copy of the publication will be available in the Library, and supplemented by further tables on the Home Office website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/omcs.html.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the cost of constructing a 2,000-bed prison. [16031]

Fiona Mactaggart: Large prisons are among the options that have been considered for new accommodation in the prison estate.

The building of such prisons was considered in the report by Patrick Carter "Review of PFI and Market Testing in the Prison Service" in January 2001. Based on Prison Service estimates in 2001, the report indicated that construction costs for a 2,000 place prison built to a category B standard of security would be around £100,000 per place.

No decision to proceed with any such prison has since been made. If the decision is to be made, all factors, including the cost of construction, will be considered at the time.

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of prisoners in custody is represented by *(a)* foreign nationals, *(b)* those with limited or no command of English, *(c)* those from ethnic minorities, *(d)* those classed as vulnerable and *(e)* those with special needs; and if he will make a statement on provision for those groups. [16529]

Fiona Mactaggart: As at 30 June 2005, the proportion of the prison population represented by foreign nationals was 13 per cent. The proportion represented by those from ethnic minority groups was 25 per cent. This was as recorded on the Prison Service IT system. The information requested on the other specified categories is not centrally available.

The Prison Service is committed to ensuring that all prisoners irrespective of nationality, race, ethnicity, disability or other circumstance are able, as far as practicable, to participate equally in prison life.

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* prison staff, *(b)* prison governors and *(c)* other prison staff have been disciplined for drugs (i) possession and (ii) usage in each year since 1997. [16550]

Fiona Mactaggart: The following table details the type of misconduct and the grade of the member of staff disciplined for the possession or use of drugs in each year since 1997.

	Prison officers	*Prison governors*	*Other prison staff*
1997	0	0	0
1998	0	0	0
1999	[1] 1	0	0
	[2] 1	—	—
2000	[1] 1	0	0
2001	[2] 1	0	[1] 1
2002	0	0	0
2003	[1] 2	0	0
2004	0	0	0
2005	[1] 1	0	[1] 1
	—	—	[2] 1

[1] Denotes possession of drugs
[2] Denotes use of drugs

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what sanctions are taken against visitors to prison inmates who are found *(a)* to be in possession of prohibited substances and *(b)* dealing in prohibited substances; and if he will make a statement. [16551]

Fiona Mactaggart: In both cases the police are asked to take action against any visitors found in possession of or dealing in prohibited substances. Any such visitors may then be banned from visiting the prison, or subjected to visiting restrictions at the discretion of the governor.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the prison population of England and Wales is per 100,000 population. [16586]

Fiona Mactaggart: The prison population in England and Wales was 142 per 100,000 of the population as at 31 August 2004, as recorded on the Prison Service IT system.

Proceeds of Crime

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much money has been seized as a result of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 *(a)* in total and *(b)* from drug-related cases in (i) Southend, (ii) Essex and (iii) the Metropolitan police area of London. [16592]

Hazel Blears: Information is not available in the form requested. The total value of assets recovered under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and earlier legislation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland was £54.5 million in 2003–04, £84.4 million in 2004–05, and £31.4 million in the five months to the end of August 2005. The total value of receipts from confiscation orders and cash forfeitures related to drug offences obtained by Essex police and the Metropolitan police service under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and earlier legislation is set out in the table. Information on the value of receipts obtained by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs is not available by region.

Total value of confiscation order receipts related to drug offences obtained by Essex police and the Metropolitan Police Service

	£
2003–04	
Essex	17,980.00
Metropolitan police	1,141,312.37
2004–05	
Essex	49,255.62
Metropolitan police	4,363,607.94
2005–06	
Essex	100,431.67
Metropolitan police	1,339,477.99

Total value of cash forfeiture receipts related to drug offences obtained by Essex police and the Metropolitan Police Service

	£
2003–04	
Essex	0.00
Metropolitan police	202,810.00
2004–05	
Essex	0.00
Metropolitan police	572,357.55
2005–06	
Essex	33,500.00
Metropolitan police	936,148.39

Terrorism Act

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in how many cases a suspect has been released before the maximum 14 days under the Terrorism Act 2000 (schedule 8, as amended by section 306 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003) and then rearrested once heavily-encrypted computer data connected with the case has been decrypted. [16736]

Hazel Blears: The Home Office does not hold details of individual cases. The information would only be held by individual police forces.

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people who have been stopped and searched under the Terrorism Act 2000 have subsequently been *(a)* arrested, *(b)* charged with and *(c)* convicted of terrorist-related offences, broken down by (i) year, (ii) gender, (iii) ethnicity and (iv) religion. [16737]

Hazel Blears: Statistics on stop and search are available in two annual publications that can be accessed on the research, development and statistics page of the Home Office website.

The Home Office Statistical Bulletin: "Arrests for Notifiable Offences and the Operation of Certain Police Powers under PACE; England and Wales", details stop-searches under the Terrorism Act 2000, by police force area over financial years. The bulletin also shows subsequent arrests.

The document "Publications under Section 95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991; Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System" details stop-searches under the Terrorism Act 2000 by ethnicity. Figures are collated by police force area over financial years. They also show subsequent arrests under the Terrorism Act and other legislation.

The figures are collated by police force area, rather than each city. Gender and religion statistics for those stop-searched under the Terrorism Act 2000 are not recorded.

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been re-arrested for a terrorist-related offence having previously been released before the 14 days' expiration under the Terrorism Act 2000 (schedule 8, as amended by section 306 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003), broken down by *(a)* year, *(b)* gender, *(c)* ethnicity and *(d)* religion. [16741]

Hazel Blears: To answer this question would require details of individual cases, which are not held by the Home Office.

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people detained for more than seven days under the Terrorism Act 2000 (Schedule 8, as amended by section 306 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003) have been *(a)* charged and *(b)* released without charge, broken down by (i) year, (ii) gender, (iii) ethnicity and (iv) religion. [16743]

Hazel Blears: The maximum period of detention pre-charge was extended to 14 days with effect from 20 January 2004. According to statistics provided by the police, between 20 January 2004 and 4 September 2005, 357 people were arrested of whom 36 have been held for more than seven days. The breakdown of these cases is given in the table. More detailed information is not collated centrally.

Terrorism Act 2000: Detained for more than 7 days

	Number held	*Charged*	*Released without charge*
2004 (20 January to 31 December)			
7–8 days	3	1	2
8–9 days	0	0	0
9–10 days	11	6	5
10–11 days	1	0	1
11–12 days	0	0	0
12–13 days	0	0	0
13–14 days	9	9	0
2005 (1 January to 4 September)			
7–8 days	1	1	0
8–9 days	0	0	0
9–10days	5	4	1
10–11 days	1	1	0
11–12 days	1	1	0
12–13 days	2	1	1
13–14 days	2	2	0

Young Offenders

Mrs. Dean: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of young offenders he estimates have *(a)* alcohol and *(b)* drugs abuse problems. [5776]

Fiona Mactaggart: Home Office research published in February 2003 "Substance Use by Young Offenders" found that of 293 young offenders surveyed, over 85 per cent. had used cannabis, alcohol and tobacco but less than 20 per cent. had used heroin and crack cocaine.

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) published a review of the substance misuse needs of young people in custody (2004), a survey of 473 young people. 32 per cent. of this group reported to have used a class A drug in the last year, 72 per cent. used cannabis on a daily basis in the 12 months before arrest, and the following substances were used more than once a week: ecstasy by 26 per cent.; amphetamines by 15 per cent. and solvents by 14.5 per cent. 74 per cent. of the sample drank alcohol more than once a week. The majority of drinkers regularly exceeded six units on a single drinking occasion.

The YJB and National Treatment Agency (NTA) have agreed a joint performance indicator for youth offending teams (YOTs) which requires all young people supervised by YOTs to be screened for substance misuse including alcohol and to access intervention and treatment services without delay. The target is monitored quarterly and data for 2004 to 2005 identified that 11,551 young people supervised by YOTs had a substance misuse need requiring an intervention or treatment.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Claimants

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of people claiming *(a)* state pension, *(b)* jobseeker's allowance and *(c)* incapacity benefit in Forest of Dean constituency; and if he will make a statement. [15842]

Mr. Timms: The latest available information for the Forest of Dean parliamentary constituency is as follows.

The number of state pension recipients as at September 2004 was 18,800.

The number of jobseeker's allowance claimants as at September 2004 was 687.

As at August 2004, the number of incapacity benefit recipients was 2,400. The number of severe disability allowance recipients was 500.

Notes:

State pension and incapacity benefit

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.

2. Figures are based on 5 per cent, sample and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.

3. The incapacity benefit figure includes credit-only cases.

4. Parliamentary constituencies are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant Office for National Statistics postcode directory.

Jobseeker's allowance

1. Figures are not rounded and include credit-only cases.

Sources:

State pension and incapacity benefit—IAD Information Centre, 5 per cent. sample.

Jobseeker's allowance—100 per cent. claimant count of unemployment-related benefits, Jobcentre Plus computer systems including clerically held cases.

Civil Servants

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many civil servants are employed to administer the state pension scheme and benefits distributed to senior citizens; and what the total cost of employing these civil servants was in the last year for which figures are available. [16666]

Mr. Timms: Staff in the Pension Service are responsible for administering the state pension and pension credit schemes. The number of staff employed in the Pension Service in 2004–05 was 16,193 at an annual cost of £352,907,000.

It is not possible to identify separately, staff working in other departmental agencies who administer other benefits to senior citizens.

CSA

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total amount of maintenance payments owed by non-resident parents as determined by the Child Support Agency is; and what proportion of this amount was paid in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [10140]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty to Mr. Danny Alexander, dated 12 October 2005:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the total amount of maintenance payments owed by non-resident parents as determined by the Child Support Agency is; and what proportion of this amount was paid in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Details of the total amount of maintenance payments due and sums received are published in the Agency's Annual Report and Accounts each year and are set out in the following tables.

Full maintenance assessments and maintenance calculations

	Amount due[1] £m	Sum received £m	Percentage collected
2000–01	677	484	71
2001–02	696	514	74
2002–03	752	559	74
2003–04	683	568	83
2004–05	734	576	78

Interim maintenance assessments

	Amount due £m	Sum received £m	Percentage collected
2000–01	75	19	25
2001–02	51	15	29
2002–03	43	14	33
2003–04	131	12	9
2004–05	112	10	9

Total—Full maintenance assessments, maintenance calculations and interim maintenance assessments

	Amount due £m	Sum received £m	Percentage collected
2000–01	752	503	67
2001–02	747	529	71
2002–03	795	573	72
2003–04	814	580	71
2004–05	846	[2]586	69

[1] The "amounts due" and "sums received" figures are taken from the general ledger and therefore the "percentage collected" varies slightly from the published cash compliance figures recorded in the Child Support Agency Annual Report and Accounts. This is because the cash compliance figures are derived from a different data source using a slightly different methodology.

[2] Total receipts for 2004–05 were £602 million comprising £586 million of maintenance receipts from non-resident parents and £16 million received in respect of Agency fees and other non maintenance receipts.

I hope that this answer is helpful.

Jeremy Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when the Child Support Agency will submit its business transformation programme to the Department; and if he will place a copy of the report in the Library. [14110]

Mr. Plaskitt: My right hon. friend the Secretary of State has asked the chief executive Stephen Geraghty to conduct a full review of the agency, which will produce a future strategic plan. I will be considering this review shortly, and will report back to the House before the end of the year.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 18 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1063, on the Child Support Agency, whether he proposes to amend the time scale under which payments made by those whose CSA cases transferred from the old calculation system to the new calculation system will be amended to bring them to the level due under the new system. [14895]

Mr. Plaskitt: In most cases, there will be a change in the amount of child maintenance due when a case is transferred from the old scheme to the new scheme. To give non-resident parents and parents with care time to adjust to their new amount, most changes will be phased in by fixed annual steps. These steps are known as the "phasing amount".

Phasing will last for a maximum of five years or until the new amount of maintenance is reached if this is sooner.

The new chief executive is carrying out a strategic review of the agency, including the transfer of cases to the new system. He will be reporting his findings to us over the coming months.

Green Minister

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what work his Department's Green Minister has undertaken in the last three months in their official capacity in that role; [14535]

(2) what meetings his Department's Green Minister has attended in the last 12 months in their official capacity in that role. [14536]

Mr. Plaskitt: Following the General Election in May, the Cabinet Sub-Committee of Green Ministers (ENV(G)) was replaced by the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Sustainable Development in Government (EE(SD)) whose members are departmental Sustainable Development Ministers.

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath was appointed as our departmental Sustainable Development Minister in June 2005. In July, the Minister attended a seminar for Sustainable Development Ministers to discuss the Sustainable development strategy and Ministers' role in delivering it. Subsequently he met with officials to agree action to further develop work on Sustainable development within the Department which will be detailed in the Action Plan to be published in December.

New Members of Parliament

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will arrange a Tuesday morning briefing by Ministers and senior officials introducing the work of the Department to new hon. Members. [11028]

Mr. Blunkett: I have held a number of introductory meetings with new hon. Members and would obviously be happy to arrange further meetings should they be required.

Pension Entitlement (Married Women)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to reform pension entitlement for married women. [11856]

Mr. Timms: As part of the national pensions debate, we will be hosting an event on 7 November to look specifically at how we can make the pension system work well for women. Prior to this event, we will publish analysis of the pension position of women, and our response to the Pensions Commission will be guided by the principle that reform should give women and carers opportunities to build up security in retirement.

Recycling

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what measures he has put in place to ensure that his Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all paper for printed publications brought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post consumer waste; [14390]

(2) by what date his Department expects to implement in full the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper brought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications brought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post consumer waste. [14392]

Mr. Plaskitt: The new Department for Work and Pensions contract for office paper (including paper for office printers and photocopiers) has gone live. This contract changes the Department's standard use paper from that manufactured from virgin pulp to recycled paper with a minimum content of 80 per cent. post consumer waste. All virgin papers will be removed from the Department for Work and Pensions bespoke catalogue.

From January 2006 all paper for printed publications will be produced on 100 per cent. recycled paper.

Sustainable Development

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what assessment he has made of the most significant sustainable development impacts in relation to the operation of the estate of his Department. [14534]

(2) what the most significant sustainable development impacts are in relation to the operation of his Department's estate. [14541]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department for Work and Pensions currently has an environmental management system in place, in line with the targets within the framework for sustainable development on the Government estate. Within an environmental management system significant sustainable development impacts must be assessed and for the Department these have been identified as the use of energy, paper, waste and travel. Progress is reported in the Department's annual sustainable development report.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress has been made on his Department's sustainable development strategy. [14540]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department for Work and Pensions has a sustainable development strategy, which covers the Department and all its Executive agencies. The strategy is managed by the sustainable development team, who co-ordinate the contributions from all agencies. It is actively communicated to staff via the departmental intranet site and feedback from staff is always encouraged. An annual sustainable development report is produced which contains details of progress made during the year, including details of our successes in using renewable energy, environmental improvements to the Departments' vehicle fleet and the installation of resource efficient equipment across the estate. The Department will publish a sustainable development action plan in December 2005, building on the work done to date and demonstrating how it will meet the commitments contained within the new UK strategy for sustainable development, published in March this year. Some of the Department's key successes to date include:-

Long standing sustainable development policy statement.

Specific sustainability guidance for staff.

Inclusion of sustainability within internal audits.

Inclusion of sustainability within programme and project governance structures.

Introduction of a certified EMS within Jobcentre Plus south east.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

"Security, Terrorism and the UK"

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has read the report, "Security, Terrorism and the UK", jointly published by the Economic and Social Research Council and Chatham House. [15024]

Dr. Howells: I can confirm that my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has read the report. I refer my hon. Friend to the reply he gave to the hon. Member for Louth and Horncastle (Sir Peter Tapsell) on 19 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1104, stating that that he had carefully studied the report.

Belgium (UK Mission Bugging)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made by the Belgian authorities in identifying who bugged the UK Mission in the Justus Lipsius Council of Ministers building in 2003; and if he will make a statement. [15737]

Mr. Straw: Since 14 October 2004, *Official Report*, column 372W, when my right hon. Friend the Member for Rotherham (Mr. MacShane) the then Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs replied to the hon. Member for North Southwark and Bermondsey (Simon Hughes), the Belgian authorities have been continuing their investigations. No results are so far available. We and the other EU member states concerned are co-operating with the Belgian authorities.

Burma

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action the Government are taking in response to reports of human rights abuses against the Karen, Shan and Karenni ethnic minorities of Burma. [16522]

Ian Pearson: Our ambassador in Rangoon has expressed to the Burmese Foreign Minister our serious concern over reports of human rights abuses in ethnic areas, and has drawn particular attention to the concerns expressed by hon. Members and Peers.

The UK works closely with its international partners to press for improvements to human rights in Burma. When the EU Troika, including the United Kingdom, met the Burmese Foreign Minister in Kyoto on 6 May they emphasised the need for the regime to enter into a constructive dialogue with ethnic groups to achieve lasting national reconciliation.

Discrimination and persecution on the basis of religious or ethnic background has been condemned in successive UK and EU co-sponsored UN Resolutions on Burma, most recently at the UN Commission on Human Rights in April. We fully support the efforts in this field of the UN Secretary General's Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Burma, Professor Sergio Pinheiro.

We will continue to raise our concerns at every suitable opportunity.

Colombia

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Colombian Government on the deaths of trades unionists there; and what discussions he has had with the Colombian Government on implementation of UN recommendations on human rights. [15110]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My noble Friend Lord Triesman, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, raised our concerns over human rights, including the deaths of trade unionists, with the Colombian Foreign Minister when she visited London with President Uribe on 14 July. He underlined the importance of swift investigations and provision of information by the Colombians when there were reports of human rights abuses. We continue to raise specific human rights cases with the Government of Colombia through our embassy in Bogota. We brought the case of the trade unionist Luciano Romero Molina to the attention of the Colombian authorities on 23 September. We will continue to monitor this case as well as others. Human rights remain at the centre of our policy towards Colombia.

The EU Council of Ministers' conclusions on 3 October underlined the willingness of the EU to discuss mid-year progress on the implementation of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) recommendations within the framework of the G24, the group drawn from participants in the 2003 London meeting of international support for Colombia, in Bogota. We will continue to look for ways to encourage and assist the Colombian Government to improve the human rights situation in Colombia, including offers of support to help implement the UN recommendations.

G8 Summit

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the total cost for the security fence at the G8 summit in Gleneagles was. [15658]

Ian Pearson: The policing of the G8 Summit was the responsibility of the Devolved Administration. Scottish Ministers have indicated that information on the policing operation, including the cost of the security fencing deployed, is intended for future publication later in the year.

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will place in the Library a copy of the full accounts for hospitality for the G8 summit in Gleneagles. [15659]

Ian Pearson: The G8 Summit at the Gleneagles Hotel was a working event. The organisational costs, including those for catering and hospitality, will be released once all invoices and bills have been received and the figures finalised.

Paraguay

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions

he has held with the Government of Paraguay on *(a)* its relations with Bolivia and *(b)* its facilities agreement with the USA for the deployment of troops. [16208]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: None. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not had the opportunity recently to meet his Paraguayan colleagues.

Somalia

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information he has received about the trial in Somaliland of those alleged to be responsible for the murder of Mr. and Mrs. Eyeington; and if he will make a statement. [15092]

Ian Pearson: The trial of those alleged to be responsible for the murder of Mr. and Mrs. Eyeington and four other linked attacks on foreign nationals, which began in March 2005, is ongoing. The prosecution and defence teams have presented their cases to the court. Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials in London and Addis Ababa continue to monitor the trial and update the Eyeington family. A verdict hearing planned for 25 September was postponed until after the Somaliland parliamentary elections of 29 September due to security reasons. We are waiting for a new hearing date to be confirmed.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Business Start-ups

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what services are in place to assist new and small businesses; [16294]

(2) what steps he is taking *(a)* to improve services for new businesses and *(b)* to promote new businesses; and if he will make a statement. [16295]

Alun Michael: Business Link provides information and impartial support to new and existing businesses. It provides quick and easy links to a broad range of private, public and voluntary business support services. In 2004–05, Business Link provided support to over 670,000 businesses. Nearly 500,000 of these were existing businesses, the remainder, individuals thinking of, or in the process of, starting up a businesses. Business Link services are available locally in England by calling 0845 600 9 006.

The national website www.businesslink.gov.uk provides free access to all relevant information, guidance, funding and training from Government and the business sector. As one of the leading sites for small business, it has more than 750,000 visits every month from individuals involved in business.

In addition, a range of specific business support products is in place aimed at small and medium size companies. These include:

The small firm loan guarantee which underpins loans to businesses lacking sufficient collateral to access commercial loans;

The grant for research and development which is available to help businesses carry out R and D that could lead to a technologically innovative produce or process; and

Support for implementing best business practice, taking the form of a free diagnostic run by a Business Link adviser, with subsidised consultancy for selected projects.

Regional venture capital Funds have been set up in each of the nine English regions to address the equity gap encountered by small businesses with high growth potential. Government have also published—in print and on-line—a "No-Nonsense Guide to Government rules and regulations for setting up your business", and separate no-nonsense guides to "Small Business Funding and Finance for High Growth Companies".

Following the devolution of the local management of Business Link to the nine regional development agencies in April, the Small Business Service is working with the agencies to develop a national framework to ensure the continued delivery of an effective Business Link service. Essentially, this is being developed as a strong national brand, delivered locally, and managed at regional level. A core set of Business Link branded services will be offered to businesses, regardless of their location. Once agreed, these will be rolled out in each region during 2005–06. At the same time, RDAs will be making regional decisions about business support priorities and structures for the future, to ensure these core services are delivered in a way which meets local and regional priorities.

One example is the manufacturing advisory service which has proved popular with manufacturers, has helped make significant improvements in the productivity of many firms, and is managed by each regional development agency, with primary access via the local Business Link.

In addition, Government are:

Enhancing the on-line services available on www.businesslink.gov.uk to include a "start-up journey manager" which will provide guidance on the processes required to start up and develop a business;

Establishing a pathfinder round of enterprise capital funds to improve the availability of risk capital to small but potentially high growth businesses;

Launching a supplier route to Government web portal which will improve small business access to public sector procurement opportunities by advertising lower value procurement contracts on line; and

Targeting the small firms loan guarantee at start-ups and early stage businesses in improvements to the scheme which will be implemented later this year.

We are also taking steps to promote new businesses and enterprise by supporting the second national enterprise week in the week beginning 14 November to raise enterprise awareness among 14–30 year olds and pointing people to sources of further advice. In addition, a national council for graduate entrepreneurship has been established with its "Flying Starts" programme aimed at inspiring students and recent graduates about enterprise. By the end of the year, around 3,000 will have participated in the programme.

We are working with leaders in key industry sectors to promote ambition and excellence, there is close co-operation between regional development agencies and new regional skills partnerships, and the Department for Education and Skills is investing £60 million each

year in enterprise education for 14–16 year olds. We are also promoting social enterprise which now makes a significant contribution to the economy.

Small businesses make a major contribution to the health of the economy, helping to boost productivity, increase competition and innovation, and generating employment, which is why the Government's aim is to make the UK the best place in the world to start and grow a business.

Coal/gas-fired Power Stations

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total installed capacity is of *(a)* coal-fired and *(b)* gas-fired power generation commissioned in each of the last eight years. [16304]

Malcolm Wicks: The table shows the installed capacity from 1997 to 2004 by year of commission or year generation began.

A total of 29 gas and coal fired power stations were commissioned or started generation between 1997 and 2004.

Installed capacity—MW

	Total capacity of coal fired power stations	*Total capacity of gas fired power stations*	*Number of power stations*
1997	—	750	1
1998	—	3,049	6
1999	—	1,587	3
2000	393	2,952	9
2001	—	1,353	3
2002	—	1,601	5
2003	—	—	—
2004	—	1,637	2

Source:
Digest of UK Energy Statistics 2005, table 5.11

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the total installed capacity of coal-fired power stations that will close as a result of the EU Large Combustion Plant Directive. [16305]

Malcolm Wicks: Owners of coal-fired power stations are required to take a decision on whether they want to comply with LCPD by 31 December 2005. Those who choose not to do so will be required to close by the end of 2015 or after 20,000 hours of operation, whichever is sooner. However, it is possible that some of these plants would have closed in this time scale in any case due to technical or commercial factors, so it will not be possible to state how many closures are specifically as a result of the directive.

Electricity/Gas Prices

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what change he expects in average domestic *(a)* electricity and *(b)* gas prices in 2005–06. [16298]

Malcolm Wicks: Looking at price rises already announced in the domestic sector so far in this financial year, it might be expected that gas and electricity prices increase by around 15 per cent. in cash terms in 2005–06, compared to 2004–05.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the change in domestic *(a)* electricity and *(b)* gas prices was in each of the last five years. [16299]

Malcolm Wicks: The change in domestic gas and electricity prices, in real terms, for the past five years is shown in the following table.

	Gas price		*Electricity price*	
	Index (1990 = 100)	*Percentage change relative to previous year*	*Index (1990 = 100)*	*Percentage change relative to previous year*
1999	80.8	—	81.5	—
2000	77.9	-3.6	78.8	-3.2
2001	78.2	+0.4	76.4	-3.1
2002	80.7	+3.2	74.4	-2.5
2003	79.9	-1.0	73.1	-1.8
2004	84.0	+5.2	75.9	+3.9

Note:
Figures include VAT at 5 percent.
Source:
Office of national statistics, figures taken from the retail price index, relative to GDP (market prices) deflator.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the effect of the renewables obligation on electricity prices. [16300]

Malcolm Wicks: In its "Domestic Competitive Market Review 2004" Ofgem estimated that the renewables obligation currently accounts for 2 percent. of an average domestic direct debit electricity bill.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the effect of the Emissions Trading Scheme on electricity prices. [16301]

Malcolm Wicks: In 2004, Ilex Energy Consulting were commissioned to undertake an independent study on the impact of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS) on the price of electricity for consumers across Europe. The results of this study were taken into account in developing the UK National Allocation Plan for Phase I of the EU ETS. The final report is available on the Department's website.

In July 2005, IPA Energy Consulting were commissioned to conduct a study on the impact of the EU ETS on investment and pricing within the UK power generation sector. The final report will be published on the Department's website as soon as practicable.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what his assessment is of the cost per therm of *(a)* liquid natural gas and *(b)* natural gas. [15618]

Malcolm Wicks: The following table gives the price of natural gas in pence per therm for domestic consumers, manufacturing industry and power producers in the second quarter of 2005.

User	*Price in pence per therm*
Domestic consumers	65.4
Manufacturing industry	33.9
Power producers	25.5

No information is currently available on the price of liquid natural gas. The market for LNG is developing but is still small. The pricing will be affected by supply and demand but also by the oil price and the cost of pipeline gas where customers have a choice of supply.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will assess the impact of recent changes in wholesale gas prices on energy intensive users, with particular reference to the North-West; and if he will make a statement. [15116]

Malcolm Wicks: The impact of recent rises in wholesale gas prices on energy intensive users will depend on a variety of factors, including how much gas a particular company uses, the degree of their exposure to spot and/or forward prices, and the duration of the high prices. The impact on their competitiveness will also be affected by the energy prices paid by their competitors.

We are working with the Energy Intensive Users' Group and Ofgem through the Gas Prices Working Group to develop ideas for improving the operation of the forward market and ways to mitigate the effects of high forward gas prices. The EIUG delegation includes representatives from industry in the North West.

Energy Industry Funding

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what Government funding was allocated to *(a)* the nuclear industry, *(b)* the renewables sector and *(c)* carbon capture and abatement in each year since 2001. [15048]

Malcolm Wicks: Allocated Government funding is given in the following table. The DTI is also providing a funding package of £40 million to support new demonstration projects for carbon abatement technologies and hydrogen over the next three to four years.

Government funding allocation

£

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Figures for direct Government expenditure (but not including spending by the Research Councils) on nuclear fission	2.0 million	2. 1 million	2.1 million	2.2 million
Research council spend on nuclear fission	0.3 million	0.3 million	0.2 million	0.1 million
Research council spend on nuclear fusion	14.4 million	14.6 million	15.(million	19.5 million
DTI New and Renewable Energy Programme	7.2 million	13.1 million	13.7 million	11. 7 million
DTI Capital Grant Programmes—renewables (capital Grants Programme started in 2002)	0	1.2 million	4.3 million	25.8 million
Research council spend (renewables excluding carbon sequestration)	10.3 million	10.7 million	12.0 million	12.8 million
DTI Clean Coal Programme	4.4 million	3.0 million	5.0 million	[1]6.5 million
Research council spend on carbon sequestration	41.600	77.800	30.300	42.500
Defra CHP Programme	2.8 million	1.6 million	2.5 million	2.0 million

[1] Estimated.

Note:
All figures are rounded to one decimal place.

Nuclear Power

Mr. Syms: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate the Government have made of nuclear power contribution to electricity generation in *(a)* five, *(b)* 10 and *(c)* 15 years. [15660]

Malcolm Wicks: The most recent estimate the Government have made regarding the contribution that nuclear generation will make to overall electricity generation for 2010 is given in the DTI's updated emissions projections, November 2004, which is available on the DTI website at www.dti. gov.uk/energy/sepn/uep2004.pdf.

Projections for nuclear generation in 2015 and 2020 are presented in the DTI publication Energy Paper 68: Energy projections for the UK, available on the DTI website at www.dti.gov.uk/energy/inform/energy_projections/ep68_final.pdf.

The projections given for electricity generated from nuclear are:

Projections of electricity generated

	Percentage
(a) 2010	[1]18
(b) 2015	[1]10
(c) 2020	[1]7

[1] Around

Mr. Syms: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he had with British Energy on measures to promote nuclear power. [15661]

Malcolm Wicks: As part of normal business, the Department has had various discussions with British Energy and other electricity providers on a wide range of issues. During those discussions, British Energy have given us their views on the contribution nuclear power

can make to meeting policy objectives and the issues that might need to be addressed for the longer term—as have a wide range of other companies and organizations.

Mr. Syms: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans the Government have to build additional nuclear power stations. [15662]

Malcolm Wicks: The 2003 Energy White Paper makes it clear that the Government's priority is to strengthen the contribution that energy efficiency and renewable energy sources make towards meeting our carbon commitment. It therefore makes no proposals to build new nuclear power stations; but the possibility of new nuclear build at some point in the future is not ruled out.

We have also given the commitment that before any decision to proceed with the building of new nuclear power stations, there would need to be the fullest public consultation and the publication of a White Paper setting out the Government's proposals.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether he intends to have a nuclear material tracking regime that promptly detects primary containment failure or misdirection of material installed into all relevant parts of the Sellafield Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant; and if he will make a statement. [15681]

Malcolm Wicks: All civil nuclear facilities, including those at Sellafield, operate within agreed and documented safety cases. These are rigorously regulated by the Health and Safety Executive's Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII). The operational licensing of the facilities includes consideration of the adequacy of control and containment of nuclear material.

Following the incident at the Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant (THORP) in April, the British Nuclear Group Board of Inquiry made a number of recommendations, including the enhancement of systems for nuclear material tracking. Management are responding to these recommendations.

Independently of the published Board of Inquiry report, the NII is conducting its own review of the event, the findings of which it will make public. The NII will then pursue with the licensee, British Nuclear Fuels (Sellafield) Ltd. and with the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority any recommendations emerging from its findings.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the cost was of civil nuclear reactors generating electricity in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by the cost of *(a)* maintenance, *(b)* staff salaries, *(c)* security, *(d)* transport of radioactive materials, *(e)* radioactive waste removal, *(f)* radioactive waste storage, *(g)* cost of purchasing nuclear fuel, *(h)* radioactive accidents, *(i)* non-radioactive accidents and *(j)* accident insurance. [15692]

Malcolm Wicks: The UK civil nuclear reactors are operated by Magnox and British Energy.

The figures for Magnox are as follows:

Cost (£000)

Category	*Dungeness*	*Oldbury*	*Sizewell*	*Wylfa*	*Total*
Staff Salaries	17,497	19,962	18,631	21,476	77,566
Maintenance	14,548	10,335	11,664	14,365	50,912
Security	—	—	—	—	0
Radioactive Materials Transport	701	685	796	2,149	4,331
Radioactive Waste Removal	409	103	103	342	957
Radioactive Waste Storage	—	—	—	—	0
Purchase of Nuclear Fuel	1,406	2,405	1,317	6,570	11,698
Radioactive Accidents	—	—	—	—	0
Non-Radioactive Accidents	—	—	—	—	0
Accident Insurance	503	642	713	1,436	3,294
Total	35,064	34,132	33,224	46,338	148,758

Notes:
1. Security data are restricted.
2. There are no significant costs of radioactive materials storage at operational sites.
3. There is no subjective analysis of Accident costs. Given the good safety performance of reactor site, these will be insignificant.
4. Costs are 2004–05 actuals in 2004–05 money values.
5. The totals DO NOT equate to the total operating costs of these sites.

British Energy plc owns and operates the newer advanced gas-cooled reactors (AGRs) and the pressurised water reactor (PWR). Costs associated with running these reactors are therefore a matter for British Energy. The company has recently published its preliminary results for 2004–05 and these may contain some of this information (www.british-energy.com).

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he expects the Sellafield Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant to return to normal operational service; and if he will make a statement. [15693]

Malcolm Wicks: The future of the Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant (THORP) at Sellafield has not yet been decided. The plant will only reopen if the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII) approves a safety case. The NII are progressing with further investigations which will result in a separate report on the THORP incident. The Government will then form a view in the light of the recommendations in the NII report.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the latest estimate is at 2005 prices of the total costs of construction for UK civil nuclear reactor facilities, broken down by the costs of *(a)* planning, *(b)* research, *(c)* physical construction of reactors and associated nuclear facilities, *(d)* prototype reactors, *(e)* licensing reactor designs, *(f)* construction site preparation and *(g)* construction site purchase. [15698]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government have not made their own estimates for the construction of nuclear power facilities. Proposals for new nuclear build are a matter for the private sector.

However, we are aware of estimates of new nuclear build costs by organisations such as the Royal Academy of Engineering, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the University of Chicago.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps have been taken to ensure that the leaked radioactive material from the recent accident at Sellafield Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant is stored safely in the *(a)* short and *(b)* long-term; and where radioactive material will be permanently stored. [15699]

Malcolm Wicks: The situation within the concrete cell remains safe and secure and the recovery of all liquid back into primary containment has been completed. The liquid recovered is currently being held in designated storage tanks.

It is anticipated that the material will undergo reprocessing in the same way as other fuels that are reprocessed in THORP. Consequently the storage arrangements will be the same as for other reprocessed fuels.

Petroleum/Oil Supplies

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the role that his Department will play in reducing the prospective shortfall in diesel fuel refineries over the next decade. [16409]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department is monitoring the situation. There is a generally accepted view that, with no changes to the existing refineries, Europe will be short of about 50 million tonnes of diesel per year after 2012. Existing UK refineries have been developed to meet the demand for mainly petrol that was prevalent in the 1980s. Europe already has an excess of petrol and other market outlets are limited. Further investment in existing refineries could address some of the imbalance.

A further solution to the problem is to develop refineries to process heavy oil. This not only makes more diesel and jet fuel, relative to gasoline, but also gives access to oil supplies that are more readily available and cheaper than light, sweet crude.

We are aware that the oil industry is beginning to respond to the market opportunities presented by diesel and heavy oil, both in the UK and Europe. It is early days and the plans are confidential. I will inform Parliament of any developments.

Sustainable Development

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps have been taken by his Department to review its arrangements for public reporting of its sustainable development impacts. [16246]

Malcolm Wicks: The DTI reports publicly on SD impacts through the Sustainable Development in Government (SDiG) report (the 2004–05 report is currently being compiled by the Sustainable Development Commission). DTI also participates in the Whitehall working group which is reviewing the Framework for reporting on sustainable development impacts within Government.

In line with the UK Sustainable Development Strategy, DTI is producing a sustainable development action plan and will report against the commitments it lays down from December 2006. We will be reviewing our arrangements for public reporting of our SD impacts as part of developing our SD action plan.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what progress has been made on his Department's Sustainable Development Strategy. [16247]

Malcolm Wicks: The DTI was the first Government Department to produce its own Sustainable Development Strategy in 2000. The strategy identified where DTI can most make a difference in delivering the Government's Sustainable Development (SD) goals.

Since 2000 we have focused on the priorities set out in the DTI SD strategy, for example the Energy White Paper of 2003 set out four new goals for energy policy, including to put the UK on a path to cut carbon dioxide emissions by some 60 per cent. by 2050.

Other priorities drawn out in the strategy were sustainable consumption and production (SCP), corporate social responsibility (CSR) and Greening Government. These have been taken forward through a number of initiatives—including publication in 2003 of "Changing Patterns—UK Government Framework for Sustainable Consumption and Production" and the new commitments set out in chapter three of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy ("Securing the Future", of March 2005); the launch of the CSR Academy and the International Strategic Framework on CSR. Work on Greening Government is ongoing.

SD is being integrated into regulatory impact assessments (RIAs). RIAs are produced and published for all new proposals with significant public or private sector impacts. The National Audit Office will start to look at the SD aspects included in RIAs from 2006.

SD is embedded in the DTI business plan, in objectives 4, 7 and 11.

The strategy is being superseded by the SD action plan that is currently being developed.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to provide the delivery of sustainable development within Government. [16248]

Malcolm Wicks: The Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate is the main vehicle for improving the performance of the Government estate. The DTI have published our overarching commitments and outlines of our sustainability strategies for travel, water, waste, energy and biodiversity on the Department's website (www.dti.gov.uk/sustainability/sus/green.htm)

The DTI Sustainable Procurement Strategy will be finalised later this year in accordance with the framework.

A sustainability strategy has been drawn up for our estates and will be published later this year. However, the DTI are already working towards the commitments the strategy sets out.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what parts of his Department's estate will not be covered by the commitments set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. [16249]

Malcolm Wicks: The Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate covers DTI HQ and non-HQ sites and Executive agencies. Sites excluded from the framework are sites to be disposed of by 2006 and that have fewer than 50 staff and sites with minor occupancy leased from other Government Departments. Sites not covered are: Athol House (Aberdeen), Tay House (Glasgow) and the National Weights and Measures Laboratory. The rest of the DTI estate is covered.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what arrangements his Department has in place to report publicly on its key sustainable development impacts. [16251]

Malcolm Wicks: The DTI publicly reports on key sustainable development (SD) impacts through the Sustainable Development in Government (SDiG) report (the 2004–05 report is currently being compiled by the Sustainable Development Commission).

In line with the UK Sustainable Development Strategy, DTI is currently developing a sustainable development action plan, and will report against the commitments it lays down from December 2006.

The Department's environmental performance is reported in annex C7 of the departmental report 2005 (www.dti.gov.uk/expenditureplan/report2005/index.html). This gives details on how the DTI is continuing to work towards achieving the Framework for Sustainable Development in the Government Estate within its London HQ estate. For example the Department met our waste recycling targets with 59 per cent. of DTI HQ waste being recycled. Information on our performance is also included on our website www.dti.gov.uk/sustainability/sus/green.htm.

Offshore/Onshore Wind Generation

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on proposed wind farm schemes in the constituency of Westmorland and Lonsdale. [16309]

Malcolm Wicks: There is currently no commissioned or evaluated research being undertaken by the DTI in the constituency of Westmorland and Lonsdale.

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when construction of an offshore wind farm on the Rhyl Flats is expected to commence. [16518]

Malcolm Wicks: At the present time construction at Rhyl Flats is forecast to begin in April 2007.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the cost of extending the transmission and distribution systems to accommodate onshore wind generation up to 2010; and what proportion of this cost he expects will be transferred to consumers. [16306]

Malcolm Wicks: The transmission issues working group (TIWG) report issued by the DTI in June 2003 contained a number of scenarios for connecting renewable energy generation to the GB network. It assumed that no more than 1.1GW of onshore wind generation would be built onshore in England and Wales. It therefore estimated connection costs for a range of renewable generation scenarios in Scotland. The costs for 2GW, 4GW and 6GW (of all renewable technologies) were estimated at £520 million, £1235 million, £1495 million respectively.

In addition the Carbon Trust and DTI renewables network impacts study published in April 2004 estimated the costs of reinforcing the network in Scotland and the Scottish-English interconnector to connect 72 per cent. of the 2010 target to be in the order of £1.0 billion to £1.4 billion.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

"Playing with Sounds" Programme

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if she will list the strategies recommended for use by children in recognising words within the "Playing with Sounds" programme; [16453]

(2) when children are taught the long vowels in the "Playing with Sounds" programme. [16454]

Jacqui Smith: "Playing with sounds" is a set of phonics teaching materials designed to support teachers and practitioners working with children in the foundation stage and year 1. It emphasises phonics as the first approach to decoding and encoding, and primarily supports blending of different sounds to support reading and segmenting to support independent spelling and writing.

It is split into seven steps, beginning with early phonological and rhyme awareness training, moving on to teaching phoneme-grapheme (sound letter) correspondences through sounding and blending for reading, and segmenting for spelling and writing, and progresses to the long vowel sounds including the fact that some vowel sounds can be represented in more than one way and that sometimes the same grapheme is used to represent different sounds.

"Playing with sounds" covers all the phonemes by the end of year 1, including the long vowel sounds.

I will place a copy of the materials in the Library of the House.

Black Students

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many black students were excluded from school in each academic year since 1997–98. [15542]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is shown in the table.

Maintained primary, secondary and special schools[1,2]: Number of permanent exclusions, academic years: 1997/98 to 2003/04, England

	Ethnic group: Black	
	Number of exclusions	*Percentage of school population[3]*
1997/98	1,260	0.58
1998/99	1,010	0.44
1999/2000	820	0.34
2000/01[4]	780	0.31
2001/02[4]	770	0.30
2002/03[4,5]	590	0.25
2003/04[4,5]	720	0.29

[1] Includes maintained and non-maintained special schools.

[2] Includes middle schools as deemed.

[3] The number of permanent exclusions of compulsory school age and above expressed as a percentage of the total number (headcount) of all pupils of compulsory school age and above in the Black ethnic group.

[4] Estimates have been made because the data on the characteristics of excluded pupils are known to be incomplete.

[5] In 2003 the categories for recording ethnicity changed to reflect the categories used in the 2001 National Population Census. Due to this data is not directly comparable to that of previous years.

Note:
Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Citizenship Curriculum

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the new citizenship curriculum for 11 to 16-year-olds; what impact it has had on pupils since its introduction; and if she will make a statement. [16531]

Jacqui Smith: Good progress has been made since Citizenship became a statutory subject in secondary schools in 2002. Programmes of study have been developed for Citizenship alongside guidance developed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. 1,000 specialist teachers will be trained by the end of this academic year and we have 70 Advanced Skill Teachers in Citizenship. This year, there were 38,000 entries for the Citizenship Studies short course GCSE, an increase of 10,000 on last year.

City Academies

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment her Department has made of the impact academies have had on *(a)* pupils, *(b)* teachers and *(c)* local communities; and if she will make a statement. [16532]

Jacqui Smith: The Department has commissioned an independent five-year evaluation of the Academies Programme from PricewaterhouseCoopers reporting finally in September 2007. The Second Annual Report from the Evaluation of the Academies Programme demonstrated that academies are overwhelmingly popular with parents and pupils, and that they have made a significant difference to the teaching and learning culture from their predecessors. We also have evidence from examination results and Ofsted, including Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools who has said that

"in some cases, what has been achieved in a short time is nothing less than remarkable."

(a) Pupils:

12 out of the 14 academies with students taking GCSEs in 2005 improved their results compared with the last year of the predecessor school;

The average annual increase in the percentage of pupils gaining five grades A*-C at GCSE in academies is over 5 per cent.

At Key Stage 3, the rate of increase in pupils gaining level 5+ between 2004 and 2005 is higher in each subject than schools nationally.

In addition, Ofsted have conducted 13 monitoring visits to academies finding that five academies were making good progress and most were making at least satisfactory progress.

(b) Teachers:

The PwC Second Annual Report found that three quarters of staff agreed that "the principal encourages teachers to develop themselves professionally", though staff work load was found to be generally heavier in academies.

(c) Local communities:

PwC found that it is too early to assess the effect academies have had on community involvement, though academies had the clear intention to bring about community involvement and regeneration. Some academies have established pupil-run commercial enterprises, providing a range of services directly to the local community. It is also clear that academies are popular locally and the majority are over-subscribed. In September 2005 748 parents applied as first choice for the 180 year seven places at the City of London Academy, Southwark and 3,246 named the academy as one of their choices.

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many academies are expected to be opened in England in the next two years; and if she will make a statement. [16533]

Jacqui Smith: There are 27 Academies currently open in England. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister in his speech at the City of London Academy on 12 September 2005 pledged for there to be at least 40 Academies by September 2006. The Department for Education and Skills has committed in its five-year strategy to there being 200 Academies open or in development by 2010, including 60 Academies in London.

Classroom Assistants

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many classroom assistants there are in each London borough. [16223]

Jacqui Smith: The following table provides the full-time equivalent number of teaching assistants in maintained schools in each London local authority in January 2005, the latest information available.

Teaching assistants[1] in maintained nursery, primary, middle and secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units[2] in each London local authority, January 2005

	FTE
City of London	10
Camden	580
Greenwich	820
Hackney	680
Hammersmith and Fulham	380
Islington	560
Kensington and Chelsea	300
Lambeth	770
Lewisham	670
Southwark	1,030
Tower Hamlets	1,150
Wandsworth	730
Westminster	420
Barking and Dagenham	540
Barnet	980
Bexley	600
Brent	640
Bromley	560
Croydon	1,010
Ealing	690
Enfield	1,050
Haringey	900
Harrow	540
Havering	680
Hillingdon	790
Hounslow	580
Kingston upon Thames	360
Merton	530
Newham	1,300
Redbridge	820
Richmond upon Thames	330
Sutton	440
Waltham Forest	780
London	22,230

[1] Includes teaching assistants, special needs support staff and ethnic minority support staff.

[2] Includes maintained and non-maintained special schools.

Note:

Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:

Annual school census

Education (Bedfordshire)

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people have left school at 16 years of age in *(a)* the parliamentary constituency of Mid-Bedfordshire and *(b)* Bedfordshire local education authority with less than the equivalent of five GCSEs A-C grade, in each year since 1997. [16619]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested can be found in the following table.

	Number of 15 year old pupils	*Number of 15 year old pupils achieving less than 5 A*-C GCSE or equivalent*	*Percentage achieving less than 5 A*-C GCSE or equivalent*
Mid-Bedfordshire parliamentary constituency			
2003/04	1,295	532	41
2002/03	1,257	496	39
2001/02	1,243	512	41
2000/01	1,233	499	40
1999/2000	1,114	452	41
1998/99	1,103	464	42
1997/98	1,120	496	44
1996/97	1,036	502	48
Bedfordshire local education authority			
2003/04	4,819	2,352	49
2002/03	4,582	2,256	49
2001/02	4,581	2,236	49
2000/01	4,583	2,328	51
1999/2000	4,187	2,118	51
1998/99	4,287	2,263	53
1997/98	4,331	2,313	53
1996/97	4,367	2,442	56

Notes:

1. The information for this answer is derived from data collected for the School and College Achievement and Attainment Tables (formerly Performance Tables) that are published annually.

2. As standard the results reported relate to pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year i.e. 31 August.

3. For 2003/04 results incorporate GCSEs, GNVQs and a wide range of other qualifications approved pre-16. For 1996/97 to 2002/03 results are based on GCSEs and GNVQs only.

Education Funding

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list by local education authority the amount of money provided per pupil for each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [16548]

Jacqui Smith: The following table gives, for local authorities in England from 1997–98 to 2005–06, the total revenue funding per pupil in real terms. The figuresfor 2003–04 to 2005–06 are provisional as some grants have not yet been finalised. These funding figures include funding via education formula spending/ standard spending assessment and revenue grants allocated at a local authority level. It excludes the pensions transfer to EFS and the Learning and Skills Council.

Aged 3–19

Camden	4,400	4,380	4,610	4,970	5,210	5,400	5,610	5,890	6,000
Greenwich	3,890	3,940	4,180	4,580	4,800	5,000	5,140	5,340	5,550
Hackney	4,560	4,560	4,860	5,200	5,410	5,600	5,850	6,060	6,310
Hammersmith and Fulham	4,330	4,360	4,570	4,930	5,150	5,440	5,570	5,820	5,910
Islington	4,210	4,290	4,530	5,000	5,300	5,440	5,590	5,870	6,110
Kensington and Chelsea	4,300	4,360	4,670	5,030	5,280	5,610	5,730	6,010	6,100
Lambeth	4,610	4,650	4,870	5,210	5,390	5,590	5,650	5,930	6,120
Lewisham	4,150	4,190	4,390	4,690	4,930	5,110	5,300	5,510	5,740
Southwark	4,200	4,240	4,460	4,780	5,020	5,190	5,350	5,600	5,900
Tower Hamlets	4,410	4,520	4,890	5,240	5,540	5,730	5,940	6,160	6,450
Wandsworth	3,970	3,960	4,150	4,430	4,630	4,710	5,020	5,210	5,440
Westminster	4,250	4,240	4,510	4,820	5,000	5,210	5,450	5,660	5,760
Barking and Dagenham	3,220	3,370	3,480	3,740	3,960	4,120	4,300	4,490	4,610
Barnet	3,220	3,260	3,380	3,560	3,810	3,960	4,130	4,300	4,550
Bexley	3,020	3,080	3,160	3,350	3,520	3,650	3,780	3,940	4,060
Brent	3,730	3,780	3,920	4,130	4,390	4,570	4,780	5,000	5,190
Bromley	3,040	3,090	3,200	3,400	3,570	3,690	3,820	3,990	4,130
Croydon	3,270	3,310	3,450	3,660	3,850	3,970	4,060	4,270	4,400
Baling	3,380	3,500	3,650	3,920	4,170	4,280	4,510	4,740	5,000
Enfield	3,320	3,370	3,510	3,710	3,960	4,140	4,250	4,450	4,570
Haringey	3,830	3,870	4,110	4,410	4,670	4,800	5,000	5,230	5,340
Harrow	3,140	3,190	3,310	3,530	3,740	3,840	4,050	4,230	4,440
Havering	2,990	3,060	3,140	3,330	3,530	3,630	3,740	3,910	4,050
Hillingdon	3,180	3,230	3,370	3,560	3,690	3,810	3,990	4,200	4,440
Hounslow	3,360	3,420	3,580	3,810	4,030	4,220	4,460	4,630	4,840
Kingston upon Thames	3,010	3,050	3,170	3,390	3,600	3,710	3,850	4,050	4,250
Merton	3,190	3,230	3,370	3,620	3,870	3,890	4,080	4,290	4,490
Newham	3,830	3,920	4,070	4,330	4,610	4,730	4,850	5,040	5,230
Redbridge	3,300	3,320	3,410	3,600	3,770	3,900	3,960	4,150	4,300
Richmond upon Thames	3,010	3,010	3,120	3,340	3,520	3,580	3,680	3,870	4,030
Sutton	3,170	3,170	3,270	3,450	3,630	3,760	3,900	4,100	4,220
Waltham Forest	3,620	3,630	3,790	4,060	4,320	4,450	4,560	4,800	4,890
Birmingham	3,060	3,150	3,330	3,650	3,860	3,960	4,140	4,290	4,530
Coventry	2,920	3,020	3,160	3,410	3,540	3,650	3,800	3,980	4,180
Dudley	2,570	2,690	2,820	3,040	3,170	3,260	3.390	3,560	3,810
Sandwell	2,860	2,980	3,130	3,360	3,550	3,680	3,870	4,040	4,260
Solihull	2,620	2,700	2,800	3,000	3,130	3,210	3,410	3,550	3,700
Walsall	2,780	2,850	3,010	3,250	3,390	3,500	3,640	3,820	4,080
Wolverhampton	2,930	3,000	3,180	3,440	3,610	3,800	3,940	4,100	4,300
Knowsley	3,170	3,290	3,460	3,830	4,080	4,190	4,280	4,420	4,540
Liverpool	3,170	3,260	3,430	3,830	4,040	4,160	4,250	4,420	4,540
St. Helens	2,780	2,850	2,960	3,230	3,460	3,570	3,780	3,930	4,070
Sefton	2,780	2,860	2,980	3,250	3,420	3,550	3,720	3,860	4,040
Wirral	2,860	2,980	3,090	3,370	3,570	3,700	3,830	3,970	4,110
Bolton	2,750	2,830	2,990	3,240	3,360	3,480	3,600	3,770	4,030
Bury	2,630	2,730	2,870	3,090	3,240	3,330	3,480	3,670	3,840
Manchester	3,250	3,360	3,590	4,010	4,220	4,320	4,450	4,590	4,750
Oldham	2,820	2,910	3,080	3,320	3,480	3,650	3,830	4,010	4,220
Rochdale	2,860	2,940	3.100	3,380	3,550	3,710	3,880	4,080	4,300
Salford	2,840	2,960	3,130	3,490	3,730	3,780	3,930	4,090	4,280
Stockport	2,610	2,680	2,810	3,040	3,180	3,230	3,370	3,510	3,670
Tameside	2,700	2,780	2,920	3,160	3,350	3,450	3,590	3,790	3,940
Trafford	2,710	2,770	2,930	3,150	3,310	3,360	3,510	3,630	3,810
Wigan	2,680	2,760	2,890	3,120	3,260	3,330	3,510	3,670	3,850
Barnsley	2,780	2,870	3,010	3,240	3,420	3,520	3,730	3,840	4,010
Doncaster	2,840	2,920	3,060	3,290	3,440	3,550	3,810	3,950	4,130
Rotherham	2,810	2,860	3,010	3,310	3,500	3,580	3,770	3,880	4,030
Sheffield	2,870	2,930	3,100	3,420	3,590	3,660	3,790	3,920	4,060
Bradford	2,940	3,010	3,210	3,530	3,750	3,840	3,970	4,120	4,310
Calderdale	2,770	2.850	3,020	3,250	3,380	3,500	3,670	3,840	4,030
Kirklees	2,800	2,880	3,050	3,280	3,440	3,530	3,700	3,880	4,060
Leeds	2,780	2,850	2,990	3,280	3,470	3,590	3,730	3.870	4,010

	Aged 3–19								
Wakefield	2,700	2,750	2,890	3,150	3,290	3,390	3,520	3,660	3,910
Gateshead	2,770	2,910	3,050	3,340	3,550	3,660	3,860	3,990	4,150
Newcastle upon Tyne	3,120	3,130	3,260	3,570	3,780	3,890	4,030	4,180	4,340
North Tyneside	2,720	2,800	2,920	3,210	3,380	3,520	3,690	3,820	3,960
South Tyneside	2,860	2,950	3,110	3,410	3,640	3,720	3,930	4,070	4,230
Sunderland	2,810	2,900	3,020	3,310	3,510	3,610	3,810	3,950	4,130
Bath and North East Somerset	2,680	2,750	2,890	3,100	3,200	3,300	3,410	3,570	3,750
Bristol, City of	2,850	2,910	3,050	3,330	3,490	3,620	3,770	3,980	4,180
North Somerset	2,720	2,800	2,940	3,150	3,240	3,320	3,470	3,600	3,780
South Gloucestershire	2,610	2,680	2,810	2,990	3,090	3,200	3,340	3,480	3,640
Hartlepool	2,800	2,900	3,030	3,300	3,490	3,590	3,840	4,010	4,220
Middlesbrough	2,960	3,080	3,250	3,540	3,770	3,890	4,080	4,330	4,580
Redcar and Cleveland	2,800	2,890	3,020	3,310	3,540	3,620	3,810	3,970	4,130
Stockton-on-Tees	2,760	2,830	2,990	3,300	3,520	3,620	3,810	3,930	4,050
Kingston Upon Hull, City of	2,950	3,010	3,160	3,470	3,650	3,750	3,920	4,070	4,250
East Riding of Yorkshire	2,680	2,760	2,890	3,140	3,270	3,340	3,450	3,600	3,750
North East Lincolnshire	2,810	2,900	3,050	3,320	3,490	3,580	3,670	3,830	4,030
North Lincolnshire	2,760	2,890	3,030	3,280	3,390	3,450	3,610	3,750	3,950
North Yorkshire	2,740	2,810	2,950	3,180	3,310	3,410	3,550	3,690	3,840
York	2,680	2,760	2,890	3,130	3,240	3,310	3,400	3,530	3,700
Bedfordshire	2,870	2,900	3,020	3,290	3,460	3,570	3,630	3,790	3,950
Luton	3,150	3,180	3,340	3,570	3,750	3,870	4,040	4,200	4,390
Buckinghamshire	2,950	2,960	3,080	3,300	3,460	3,570	3,680	3,850	4,000
Milton Keynes	3,070	3,060	3,180	3,390	3,560	3,690	3,800	3,990	4,160
Derbyshire	2,670	2,730	2,860	3,080	3,200	3,300	3,430	3,580	3,750
Derby	2,860	2,940	3,110	3,340	3,460	3,580	3,720	3,880	4,020
Dorset	2,800	2,820	2,930	3,150	3,270	3,370	3,470	3,620	3,750
Poole	2,810	2,790	2,880	3,050	3,180	3,300	3,400	3,530	3,680
Bournemouth	2,970	2,970	3,060	3,280	3,370	3,430	3,490	3,620	3,760
Durham	2,760	2,860	3,000	3,270	3,470	3,530	3,670	3,820	4,050
Darlington	2,720	2,800	2,960	3,220	3,360	3,420	3,570	3,780	3,950
East Sussex	2,950	3,010	3,130	3,390	3,540	3,630	3,700	3,880	4,020
Brighton and Hove	3,090	3,150	3,270	3,540	3,690	3,780	3,880	4,020	4,130
Hampshire	2,770	2,830	2,920	3,140	3,310	3,390	3,470	3,620	3,730
Portsmouth	2,990	3,070	3,180	3,390	3,590	3,680	3,760	3,960	4,070
Southampton	3,050	3,140	3,240	3,470	3,660	3,750	3,860	4,020	4,200
Leicestershire	2,700	2,730	2,850	3,050	3,170	3,250	3,330	3,470	3,590
Leicester	3,050	3,130	3,310	3,560	3,720	3,850	4,040	4,190	4,370
Rutland	2,640	2,720	2,900	3,090	3,260	3,290	3,490	3,620	3,860
Staffordshire	2,640	2,690	2,810	3,020	3,150	3,210	3,370	3,510	3,670
Stoke-on-Trent	2,760	2,840	2,970	3,280	3,500	3,610	3,840	4,010	4,200
Wiltshire	2,780	2,820	2,940	3,150	3,260	3,340	3,510	3,650	3,790
Swindon	2,790	2,790	2,890	3,100	3,210	3,270	3,450	3,590	3,770
Bracknell Forest[1]	2,970	3,010	3,090	3,290	3,450	3,560	3,690	3,840	4,030
Windsor and Maidenhead[1]	2,970	3,040	3,130	3,380	3,560	3,670	3,780	3,940	4,120
West Berkshire[1]	2,780	2,880	2,980	3,230	3,400	3,500	3,690	3,870	4,100
Reading[1]	3,000	3,090	3,210	3,490	3,650	3,820	3,970	4,200	4,410
Slough[1]	3,410	3,560	3,700	3,930	4,140	4,300	4,420	4,620	4,750
Wokingham[1]	2,710	2,760	2,840	3,060	3,220	3,340	3,530	3,700	3,930
Cambridgeshire[1]	2,710	2,780	2,930	3,130	3,240	3,320	3,490	3,660	3,810
Peterborough[1]	2,950	3,010	3,180	3,390	3,520	3,660	3,850	4,070	4,220
Cheshire[1]	2,690	2,740	2,860	3,070	3,200	3,280	3,420	3,570	3,740
Halton[1]	2,940	2,980	3,120	3,420	3,660	3,770	3,990	4,170	4,360
Warrington[1]	2,660	2,710	2,810	3,010	3,150	3,230	3,340	3,460	3,640
Devon[1]	2,880	2,920	3,000	3,210	3,330	3,410	3,530	3,670	3,820
Plymouth[1]	2,930	2,970	3,060	3,280	3,390	3,500	3,600	3,750	3,930
Torbay[1]	2,970	2,970	3,060	3,280	3,380	3,460	3,560	3,690	3,850
Essex[1]	2,960	3,000	3,100	3,330	3,490	3,570	3,680	3,850	3,970
Southend-on-Sea[1]	3,050	3,080	3,190	3,420	3,600	3,700	3,780	3,960	4,090
Thurrock[1]	3,100	3,150	3,260	3,480	3,660	3,770	3,890	4,090	4,160
Herefordshire[1]	2,870	2,910	3,040	3,260	3,380	3,470	3,640	3,790	3,960
Worcestershire[1]	2,790	2,770	2,850	3,070	3,210	3,290	3,390	3,530	3,690
Kent[1]	2,940	3,000	3,110	3,340	3,500	3,610	3,710	3,900	3,990
Medway[1]	2,900	2,960	3,070	3,290	3,450	3,570	3,630	3,790	3,910
Lancashire[1]	2,780	2,850	2,990	3,230	3,380	3,460	3,550	3,720	3,900
Blackburn with Darwen[1]	2,940	3,060	3,290	3,550	3,730	3,820	4,060	4,210	4,400
Blackpool[1]	2,830	2,930	3,040	3,290	3,430	3,540	3,730	3,880	4,040
Nottinghamshire[1]	2,760	2,780	2,900	3,140	3,250	3,340	3,440	3,580	3,740
Nottingham[1]	3,140	3,200	3,380	3,670	3,870	4,020	4,190	4,370	4,620
Shropshire[1]	2,790	2,820	2,940	3,160	3,310	3,390	3,550	3,700	3,850
Telford and Wrekin[1]	2,860	2,910	3,030	3,290	3,450	3,490	3,620	3,760	3,920
Cornwall	2,810	2,920	3,050	3,270	3,410	3,510	3,570	3,720	3,870
Cumbria	2,680	2,810	2,950	3,200	3,360	3,460	3,630	3,780	3,950
Gloucestershire	2,750	2,800	2,940	3,160	3,280	3,370	3,480	3,610	3,770

	Aged 3–19								
Hertfordshire	2,960	3,000	3,090	3,320	3,470	3,560	3,640	3,810	3,910
Isle of Wight	3,050	3,120	3,230	3,500	3,690	3,780	3,810	3,970	4,110
Lincolnshire	2,790	2,860	2,990	3,210	3,360	3,460	3,610	3,760	3,910
Norfolk	2,860	2,900	3,020	3,260	3,410	3,490	3,590	3,760	3,900
Northamptonshire	2,730	2,790	2,920	3,130	3,260	3,350	3,520	3,660	3,820
Northumberland	2,750	2,830	2,950	3,200	3,390	3,500	3,640	3,800	4,000
Oxfordshire	2,940	2,960	3,070	3,310	3,460	3,560	3,650	3,810	3,940
Somerset	2,750	2,810	2,940	3,170	3,300	3,370	3,490	3,640	3,770
Suffolk	2,810	2,820	2,930	3,150	3,280	3,380	3,460	3,620	3,760
Surrey	2,940	2,970	3,070	3,270	3,430	3,510	3,600	3,750	3,930
Warwickshire	2,670	2,740	2,880	3,090	3,210	3,320	3,500	3,650	3,780
West Sussex	2,940	2,930	3,020	3,220	3,380	3,470	3,570	3,720	3,840
England	2,940	3,000	3,140	3,390	3,550	3,650	3,790	3,950	4,110

[1] 1997–98 figures for LEAs subject to local government reorganisation in that year have been estimated, pro-rata to their post LGR figures.

Notes:

1. 2003–04 to 2005–06 figures are provisional as some grants have not yet been finalised/audited.
2. Figures reflect education standard spending assessment/education formula spending settlement (all sub-blocks), plus all revenue grants in DfES departmental expenditure limits relevant to EFS pupils aged 3–19.
3. Figures exclude education maintenance allowances and grants not allocated at LEA level. They also exclude the pensions transfer to EFS and the Learning and Skills Council for 2003–04 to 2005–06.
4. The pupil numbers used are those underlying the SSA/EFS settlement calculations plus PLASC three-year-olds maintained pupils and estimated three to four-year-olds funded through state support in maintained and other educational institutions where these are not included in the SSA pupil numbers.
5. Real terms figures are based on GDP deflators as at 30 June 2005 (2004–05 prices).
6. Per pupil figures are rounded to the nearest £10.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many meetings of the *(a)* EU Contact Committee for implementation of the Television without Frontiers Directive, *(b)* EU Committee for the implementation of the training programme for professionals in the European audiovisual programme industry and of the programme to encourage the development, distribution and promotion of European audiovisual works (MEDIA II) and *(c)* EU Committee for the implementation of the programme establishing a single financing and programming instrument for cultural co-operation (Culture 2000) are planned for the UK presidency of the EU; who will be presiding over each meeting; which other UK representatives will be present; what provision is in place for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [16461]

James Purnell: I have been asked to reply.

All of the Committee meetings listed are convened and chaired by the European Commission, regardless of which country holds the Presidency of the EU.

(a) The EU Contact Committee for the implementation of the Television Without Frontiers Directive will meet once in Brussels during the UK Presidency, on 14 October 2005. The European Commission convenes and chairs the meetings. The UK is represented by DCMS officials. The UK Government consults devolved administrations on non devolved policy issues, such as broadcasting, as set out in the Memorandum of Understanding and Concordats on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues.

(b) The Media Management Committee will meet four times in Brussels during the UK Presidency, on 22 July, 28 October, 25 November and 16 December 2005. The European Commission convenes and chairs the meetings. The UK is represented either by DCMS officials, or UK Film Council (UKFC) representatives, or both. Officials from the devolved administrations may also attend. Prior to each Media Management Committee meeting, DCMS officials meet the UKFC and Media desk representatives from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to allow them to feed into discussions and report on programme implementation.

(c) The Culture 2000 Management Committee will meet once in Brussels during the UK Presidency. No date has been fixed for the next meeting. The European Commission convenes and chairs the meetings. The UK is represented by DCMS officials. Officials from the devolved administrations may also attend.

Free Fruit (Schools)

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what age groups of school children are eligible for free fruit at school; and what plans there are for extending this entitlement. [16012]

Caroline Flint: I have been asked to reply.

Children aged four to six attending local education authority (LEA)-maintained infant, primary and special schools are eligible to receive a fresh piece of fruit or vegetable each school day provided that their school has chosen to participate in the school fruit and vegetable scheme.

The fruit and vegetables are for whole classes so in effect all children in reception, year one and year two classes are benefiting even though some children may fall outside of the stipulated age range.

As at February 2005, close to 2 million children in over 16,000 schools were benefiting from the scheme.

There was a commitment in the "Choosing Health" White Paper to consider extending the school fruit and vegetable scheme to stand alone LEA-maintained nurseries once the results from a large-scale evaluation were published this year. The results were published in September and the Department is currently considering this extension.

GCSE Curriculum

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans her Department has to ensure the curriculum development in core GCSE subjects keeps pace with the projected skills demand of UK businesses. [16556]

Jacqui Smith: The recent 14–19 Education and Skills White Paper clearly states that the reforms it sets out are vital to our economy by equipping young people with the skills employers need and that all learning programmes should have clear progression routes to further learning.

We believe that a strong grounding in functional English, maths and ICT are essential skills that all young people need to participate effectively in everyday life, including the workplace. To secure these skills we are toughening GCSEs so that, in future, no-one will be able to get a higher grade in English and maths without achieving mastery of the functional basics. We are also introducing a new general diploma to recognise the achievement of those who achieve five good GCSEs or equivalent—including English and maths.

We are continuing work to reform mathematics, as proposed in our response to Professor Adrian Smith's inquiry, improving motivation and progression to advanced level. This includes:

a newly structured GCE introduced for first teaching from September 2004;

replacing the three-tier mathematics GCSE two-tier qualification to enable all learners to have access to a grade C pass;

development work on a curriculum and assessment "pathways" model that covers entry level to level 3 of the National Qualifications Framework; and,

trialling of guidance material for an extension curriculum at KS3 and KS4.

The Ten Year Science and Innovation Investment Framework published last year set out the our strategy for sustaining a strong supply of scientists and engineers. The new programme of study for science at Key Stage 4 being introduced from next September will help pupils to understand key scientific concepts and scientific and technological developments in society.

To ensure that this is successful, the key stage 3 review will:

strengthen the emphasis on English and mathematics, in particular by expecting schools to focus systematically on those who arrive from primary school without having reached the expected standard in the Key Stage 2 literacy and numeracy tests, continue to publish national test results and introduce a new on-line test of ICT skills;

introduce similar changes in science by slimming down the science Key Stage 3 curriculum to make it more manageable and focus on the key conceptual underpinnings of science, as well as its excitement and relevance.

Homophobic Bullying

Stephen Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what professional in-service training sessions her Department is providing to teachers and head teachers *(a)* to enable them to challenge homophobic bullying in schools and *(b)* to improve the academic attainment and truancy rates of gay and lesbian pupils. [16342]

Jacqui Smith: Tackling homophobia in schools is an issue that is taken seriously by the Department We want to ensure that all pupils, whatever their sexual orientation, are safe at school, want to be there, and are able to reach their full educational potential. For this, head teachers and teachers need the right mix of skills and knowledge, and the confidence to use them.

Our Make The Difference anti-bullying conference programme which ran from 2003–04 in each of the nine Government Office regions was targeted at head teachers. The conferences celebrated and shared good practice in preventing and addressing bullying and offered all schools an opportunity to learn at first hand from the very successful. The conference workshops supported schools in addressing aspects such as homophobic bullying, which many schools can find especially challenging.

The Department has also developed a Personal Social Health Education Continuing Professional Development video which shows good teaching practice, this covers the handling of sensitive issues including sexuality and homophobia. The PSHE CPD programme is ongoing to help teachers improve their confidence and competence in dealing with sensitive issues including sexuality.

Language Teaching

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the languages taught at GCSE level or equivalent; and how many students sat a GCSE in each in 2004–05. [16076]

Jacqui Smith: The figures requested for 2005 (academic year 2004/05) are not yet available; the following table shows the numbers of attempts by 15-year-old pupils in all schools in England at GCSEs in each modern foreign language in 2004 (academic year 2003/04).

	Number
Arabic	1,284
Bengali	1,793
Chinese	1,866
Dutch	206
French	289,756
German	116,347
Gujarati	1,159
Irish	4
Italian	3,466
Japanese	654
Modern Greek	519
Modern Hebrew	413
Panjabi	1,292
Persian	312
Polish	245
Portuguese	607
Russian	1,352
Spanish	53,539
Turkish	1,034
Urdu	6,069

Notes:

1. For each subject, only one attempt per pupil is counted.
2. Ages are as at the beginning (i.e. 31 August) of the academic year.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 18 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1407W, on primary schools language tuition, (1) whether extra-curricular provision of language learning is included within the figure provided; [16434]

(2) what estimate her Department has made of the proportion of primary schools which offer within their curriculum more than 20 minutes teaching a week in a modern language; [16435]

(3) what proportion of primary schools taught *(a)* French, *(b)* Spanish, *(c)* German, *(d)* Italian and *(e)* other languages in 2002/03. [16438]

Jacqui Smith: The answer of 18 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1407W, outlined that, based on research carried out for the DfES in 2002/03, 44 per cent. of schools teaching Key Stage 2 pupils (ages 7–11) offered some form of language learning, including extra-curricular classes. That research also highlighted that approximately 3 per cent. of schools were offering language learning programmes within curriculum time to all year groups in Key Stage 2 for more than 20 minutes a week. The same research concluded that *(a)* 40 per cent. of primary schools taught French to their pupils, *(b)* 6 per cent. of schools taught Spanish, *(c)* 4 per cent. taught German, *(d)* 2 per cent. taught Italian and *(e)* 1 per cent. taught other languages.

Learning and Skills Council

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what evidence she has collated of whether there has been a failure of the Learning and Skills Council to pay agreed national rates under the 2004–05 apprenticeships contract; and if she will make a statement. [16523]

Bill Rammell: The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funds all learners at published national rates up to but not exceeding the maximum contract value that each learning provider negotiates for each academic year. The LSC fulfilled its obligation to fund all learners through the contracts agreed at the start of 2004/05. However, it became clear earlier this year that some providers would exceed their maximum contract value due, in the main, to larger programmes for learners, better retention and higher than planned levels of achievement. The LSC was keen to reward providers for the improvements made and a further £38 million was made available by the Department to the LSC. As a result the LSC was able to make additional payments to providers who exceeded their agreed maximum contract value calculated at 50 per cent. of the published national rate for existing learners and in addition to fund new apprentices aged 16 to 18 at the full rate. Although we are aware that some providers were not content with this, we are confident that the LSC has treated them fairly.

School Performance Measurements

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on recent progress in developing and implementing a value-added methodology for measuring school and pupil performance which takes account of factors other than prior attainment. [16856]

Jacqui Smith: A Contextualised Value Added (CVA) measure is being introduced for all DfES and Ofsted school improvement and accountability purposes. In addition to prior attainment, CVA also takes account of a range of other factors that impact on performance but that are outside a school's control, such as gender, ethnicity, SEN status, and levels of pupil mobility and deprivation.

The model has been developed in consultation with schools, local authorities, Ofsted, and academics and other professionals in the field. Taking account of a much broader range of factors improves the way we measure school effectiveness by allowing us to consider the impact each school makes despite the particular circumstances of its intake.

CVA has been incorporated into the 2005 Pupil Achievement Tracker and Ofsted's PANDAs for Key Stages 2, 3 and 4. Also we are currently piloting its inclusion in the Achievement and Attainment Tables.

School Rules

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance is issued by her Department to school governors on the development of *(a)* attendance, *(b)* uniform and *(c)* behaviour policies. [16449]

Jacqui Smith: My Department has issued several pieces of guidance aimed at governors, headteachers and local authorities on pupil behaviour and attendance. The Secretary of State's "Guide to the Law for School Governors' includes information on the governing body's responsibilities together with guidance on attendance, school uniform and behaviour policies. It is published, along with a comprehensive range of information on other areas which is aimed at school governors, on the Department's website at www.governornet.co.uk/

Governors also have access to the information and advice that we give to schools through the Behaviour and Attendance (www.dfes.gov.uk/behaviourand attendance), Standards websites (www.standards.dfes.gov.uk) and Teacher Net (www.teachernet.go.uk). The Standards site gives access to comprehensive guidance and training materials on the effective management of behaviour and attendance from our Primary and Secondary National Strategies. These include practical advice on how to develop, implement and review whole school policies in these and other areas.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance is issued by her Department to schools on the imposition of detentions. [16450]

Jacqui Smith: DFES Circular 10/99, "Social Inclusion: Pupil Support", provides guidance on the use of detentions.

Full details of its contents are available at:

www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/guidanceonthelaw/10–99.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her estimate is of the number of detentions imposed in schools in 2003–04. [16451]

Jacqui Smith: Data on pupil detentions is not collected centrally and there is no reliable basis for an estimate.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will review the statutory requirement under section 5 of the Education Act 1997 that parents be given 24 hours' notice of a detention. [16452]

Jacqui Smith: There are currently no plans to review the statutory requirement for the period of notice given to parents about school detentions.

School Sports

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate her Department has made of the proportion of pupils in schools outside school sport partnerships who participate in at least two hours of PE and sport per week. [16420]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested on schools outside of school sport partnerships is not held centrally. The annual PE, school sport and club links survey collects data from schools within school sport partnerships. By September 2006, all maintained schools will be within a partnership.

The 2004–05 survey found that overall, 69 percent. of 5–16 year-olds in partnership schools were spending at least two hours in a typical week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum. This is up 7 percentage points from the 2003–04 survey.

Science Education

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* GCSE and *(b)* A-level students took (i) chemistry, (ii) physics and (iii) biology in the last year for which figures are available; and what the figures were (A) five, (B) 10, (C) 15 and (D) 20 years ago. [16664]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested on GCSE and A-level entries can be found in the following table.

	1984	*1994*	*1999*	*2004*
O-level entries and GCSE candidates[1]				
Biology	223,596	37,129	38,785	44,758
Chemistry	150,968	35,764	37,640	43,073
Physics	183,705	35,394	37,205	42,501
Single Award Science	—	60,488	50,182	54,994
Double Award Science	—	380,893	441,897	479,591
Other Science	25,464	7,536	3,423	2,734
A Level entries				
Biology	45,171	41,489	47,192	44,235
Chemistry	48,068	34,772	35,831	32,130
Physics	54,722	30,810	29,552	24,606
Other Science	4,393	4,415	4,124	3,773

[1] 1984 figures are for GCE O-levels, figures from 1994 onwards are for GCSEs.

Note:

1. Figures for 1989 are unavailable as these were not supplied by the Awarding Bodies.

Teachers

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of current teachers were born on or after 1 September 1979. [16422]

Jacqui Smith: Provisional estimates indicate that in March 2004, 3.5 per cent. of full-time regular teachers in service were born on or after 1 September 1979. This is the latest information available.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many newly qualified teachers failed their assessment at the end of their induction year in 2003–04. [16426]

Jacqui Smith: The General Teaching Council for England received notification of 32 newly qualified teachers that failed their induction assessments between 1 September 2003 and 31 August 2004.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many school centred initial teacher training programmes lead to a PGCE qualification; and if she will make a statement. [16427]

Jacqui Smith: 1,360 trainees successfully completed postgraduate school-centred initial teacher training courses during 2003–04, the most recent year for which data are available. No data are collected or held centrally on the number of these trainees that received a postgraduate certificate in education.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many consortia of schools offered school centred initial teacher training in the last year for which figures are available. [16428]

Jacqui Smith: There are 56 providers of school-centred style initial teacher training for 2005–06.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers qualified under the overseas trained teacher programme in the last year for which figures are available. [16429]

Jacqui Smith: 1,028 trainees successfully completed overseas trained teacher training courses during 2003–04, the most recent year for which data are available.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what costs were incurred in transforming the Teacher Training Agency into the Training and Development Agency for Schools. [16430]

Jacqui Smith: The cost of transforming the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) to the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), with an expanded remit, was £85,222. This includes research, re-branding and new office signage. Some additional cost was incurred in taking legal advice. The benefits deriving from the TDA's new remit, which now includes responsibilities for training and development of the whole school work force, are considerable.

The TDA has also taken on the functions of a Sector Skills Council. The cost of setting up a distinct Sector Skills Council would have been significant. The re-branding of the TTA has therefore saved a considerable sum of public funds.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers qualified under *(a)* graduate teacher programme and *(b)* registered teacher programme in the last year for which figures are available. [16431]

Jacqui Smith: 4,295 trainees successfully completed graduate teacher training programmes and 177 trainees successfully completed registered teacher training programmes during 2003–04, the most recent year for which data are available.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many candidates completed a post-graduate certificate of education in the last year for which figures are available. [16433]

Jacqui Smith: 21,460 trainees successfully completed postgraduate initial teacher training courses during 2003–04, the most recent year for which data are available. This does not include employment based routes into initial teacher training. No data are collected or held centrally on the number of postgraduate trainees who, as well as being awarded qualified teacher status, received a postgraduate certificate in education.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the number of teachers suffering from *(a)* stress and *(b)* other mental health problems in each year since 1997, broken down by (i) age and (ii) local authority area. [16688]

Jacqui Smith: The requested information is not held centrally.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what support is available for teachers suffering from *(a)* stress and *(b)* other mental health problems. [16689]

Jacqui Smith: The Department has supported a range of measures to ensure that teacher health and well-being are taken seriously, which include tackling sources of stress and excessive work load. We have also encouraged better management of teacher health matters through improved occupational health guidance for schools and LEAs.

Schools are able to access local authority occupational health services or bring in their own professional support on these matters. The Department has also supported the Teacher Support Network telephone helpline service since its launch in 1999. They offer a 24 hour confidential advice and counselling service for teachers.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers there are in each London borough. [16329]

Jacqui Smith: The following table provides the full-time equivalent number of regular teachers in service in the maintained sector in January 2005, the latest information available.

Full-time equivalent regular teachers (excluding occasionals) in service in the maintained sector, London, January 2005

	Number
City of London	20
Camden	1,480
Greenwich	2,260
Hackney	1,630
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,140
Islington	1,440
Kensington and Chelsea	690
Lambeth	1,770
Lewisham	1,990
Southwark	2,030
Tower Hamlets	2,310
Wandsworth	1,840
Westminster	1,340
Barking and Dagenham	1,650
Barnet	2,790
Bexley	2,050
Brent	2,490
Bromley	2,690
Croydon	3,000
Ealing	2,330
Enfield	2,950
Haringey	1,970
Harrow	1,590
Havering	2,050
Hillingdon	2,400
Hounslow	2,160
Kingston-upon-Thames	1,190
Merton	1,260
Newham	2,820
Redbridge	2,470
Richmond-upon-Thames	1,060
Sutton	1,750
Waltham Forest	2,120
London	62,700

Note:

Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:

Annual survey of teachers in service and teacher vacancies.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers at schools in England have Qualified Teacher Status gained in Wales. [16421]

Jacqui Smith: The information is requested is not held centrally.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many candidates were awarded degrees of bachelor of arts or bachelor of science with qualified teacher status in the last year for which figures are available; [16424]

(2) how many candidates were awarded a degree of bachelor of education in the last year for which figures are available. [16425]

Jacqui Smith: In 2003/04, there were 6,070 first degree Initial teacher training (ITT) qualifiers at English HE institutions. Information on the type of first degree qualification obtained is not held centrally. However, the available information covering ITT qualifiers by subject of study is given in the table. Please note that this data includes 177 trainees on the registered teacher programme.

First degree ITT qualifiers[1, 2, 3] at English HE institutions, 2003/04

Joint academic coding system subject area	*Qualifiers*
Biological sciences	475
Physical sciences	85
Mathematical sciences	235
Computer science	135
Social studies	110
Business and administrative studies	15
Languages	685
Historical and philosophical studies	210
Creative arts and design	370
Education	3,525
Combined studies	230
Total	6,070

[1] Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5.
[2] Figures include UK and overseas domiciled qualifiers.
[3] Where students are on a primary programme and have chose not to study a specialism, then students are coded within the education subject group, otherwise, the appropriate JACS code is used to indicate any specialisms.
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many previously unqualified teachers qualified under the Qualified Teacher Status-only option administered by the Universities of Gloucestershire and Wolverhampton in the last year for which figures are available. [16432]

Jacqui Smith: 70 trainees successfully completed assessment-only training programmes provided by the University of Gloucestershire during 2003/04, the most recent year for which data are available. During the same period, the University of Wolverhampton did not provide any assessment-only training programmes.

Temporary Classrooms

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average length of time is that temporary classrooms have been in use in schools in each London borough. [16913]

Jacqui Smith: My Department does not hold information showing the average length of time that temporary classrooms have been in use in schools in each London borough.

Central Government capital support for investment in schools has increased from under £700 million in 1996–97 to £5.5 billion this year and will rise further to over £6.3 billion by 2007–08. Progress is being made year-by-year in improving the quality of the school building stock. The bulk of schools capital is now allocated by formula to authorities and schools so that they can address their local priorities, including the replacement of decayed temporary accommodation, on which we have set a high priority.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance her Department has issued on periods of use of temporary classrooms in schools. [16914]

Jacqui Smith: My Department has not issued guidance on periods of use of temporary classrooms. The periods will vary, depending largely on the quality of construction when new and on how well they are maintained.

Timber Procurement

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the refurbishment projects in her Department that *(a)* are in progress and *(b)* will start in the next six months; what action is being taken to ensure that timber for those projects will be procured from legal and sustainable sources; and whether guidance will be issued to contractors on each of these projects to ensure that the timber used on site during refurbishment also comes from legal and sustainable sources. [16278]

Maria Eagle: There are no refurbishment projects in progress that include the procurement of wood and we do not have any refurbishment projects in the next six months that would include the procurement of wood.

It is departmental policy to procure timber and timber related products that have been legally produced from sustainable sources.

University Allocations

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which subjects are assessed by her Department as of strategic national importance in the allocations to university departments by the Higher Education Funding Council; and how many departments have closed in 2005 in each of these areas; and if she will make a statement. [16934]

Bill Rammell: Information on the closure or opening of university courses and departments is not collected centrally by either my Department, the Higher Education Furding Council for England (HEFCE), or the Higher Education Statistical Agency (HESA). HEFCE does not fund individual university departments but allocates block grant to Institutions which are autonomous organisations responsible for their own academic direction and strategic use of funds. Within that framework, we asked HEFCE for advice on how to secure and strengthen subjects of strategic national importance. After considering the views of the Higher Education sector and others with an interest, we will be responding formally to that advice shortly and a copy of that response will be placed in the Library.

University Students

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the percentage of university students who studied abroad for a proportion of their higher education in each year since 1990. [16680]

Bill Rammell: The latest available figures are shown in the table. Figures for 2004/05 will not be available until December 2005. Comparable figures for earlier years are not available centrally.

UK domiciled undergraduate and postgraduate students at English higher education institutions, studying part of their course overseas:

	Exchange students studying abroad[1]	
	Number	*Percentage*
1994/95	1,970	0.2
1995/96	2,535	0.2
1996/97	3,030	0.2
1997/98	2,770	0.2
1998/99	3,590	0.3
1999/2000[2]	4,465	0.3
2000/01[2]	3,905	0.3
2001/02	4,005	0.3
2002/03	4,305	0.5
2003/04	4,300	0.3

[1] Students on official exchange programmes.

[2] Figures prior to 2000/01 are based on students in attendance at HE institutions on 1 December of respective academic years; figures for 2000/01 onwards are on a whole year basis, which counts students who attend at any point during the academic year.

Note:
Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5 and percentages have been rounded to one decimal place.

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of first year students at university in *(a)* London and *(b)* England were from black and minority ethnic communities in each of the last five school years. [16687]

Bill Rammell: The latest information is shown in the following table. Figures for 2004/05 will be available in December 2005.

Full-time UK domiciled undergraduate entrants:

	White	*Black and ethnic minorities*[1]	*Total known*	*Unknown*	*Total*	*Percentage black and ethnic minorities*[1,2]
Higher education institutions in London						
2000/01	23,870	23,210	47,080	4,215	51,295	49.3
2001/02	22,795	24,920	47,720	4,370	52,090	52.2
2002/03	23,495	26,200	49,695	3,925	53,620	52.7
2003/04	22,655	25,520	48,170	4,595	52,770	53.0
Higher education institutions in England						
2000/01	204,300	50,080	254,380	14,255	268,635	19.7
2001/02	210,125	55,010	265,135	16,945	282,080	20.7
2002/03	220,185	59,130	279,315	14,350	293,660	21.2
2003/04	222,515	60,645	283,160	13,470	296,630	21.4

1 As from 2001/02. figures include students of mixed race. In 2001/02, a revised classification of ethnic groups was introduced, which included new categories for those who were of mixed race.

[2] Based on those students whose ethnicity was known.

Notes:
Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5, so components may not sum to totals.
Percentages have been rounded to one decimal place.
Figures are on a whole year count basis, which counts students who are enrolled at any point in the academic year.

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

HEALTH

Aspartame

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on how many cases of adverse effects related to aspartame consumption her Department has received representations since 1983. [16016]

Caroline Flint: Since 1983, the former Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Food Standards Agency have received 33 representations on cases of adverse effects related to aspartame consumption.

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what independent research was *(a)* carried out and *(b)* evaluated by the Government before the approval of aspartame for human consumption in the UK; and what research evaluated by the Government was commissioned and funded by the sweetener industry. [16017]

Caroline Flint: G.D. Searle and Company, the United States manufacturer of aspartame, provided the research considered by the Government on aspartame prior to its approval in the United Kingdom in 1982. In addition to the Company's submission, a number of papers published in the scientific literature were considered. The safety of this sweetener has been assessed subsequently, most recently in 2001, using data obtained from the published scientific literature.

Research published in the literature represents both independently funded studies and those which have been commissioned by interested parties.

Avian Influenza

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what discussions she has had with manufacturers to secure pandemic vaccine supplies against avian influenza; [15420]

(2) what measures she has taken to create strategic vaccine stockpiles to protect key emergency and healthcare workers at the onset of an avian influenza pandemic; [15421]

(3) what measures she has taken to identify an effective pandemic vaccine for avian influenza; [15422]

(4) what measures she has taken to ensure the shortest possible delay between the declaration of an avian influenza pandemic and the production of an effective vaccine. [15423]

Caroline Flint: Vaccine specifically against a pandemic strain of influenza virus needs to be developed to match that particular strain. This work can only be done once that strain has emerged and been identified, although preparation can shorten the lead-in time. We are working closely with manufacturers, the World Health Organization, the European Commission and other countries to ensure that a vaccine can be developed as quickly as possible once a pandemic flu strain emerges. Departmental officials have met with representatives from six major manufacturers to discuss how to minimise the delay in production and secure early access to vaccine for the United Kingdom population.

Maintaining health services will be key in reducing the impact of a possible flu pandemic and healthcare workers may need to be prioritised for vaccine. As part of our ongoing work on preparedness we have invited manufacturers to tender for a contract to supply a limited amount of H5N1 vaccine. This vaccine would be based on the strain currently circulating in South East Asia and could offer some protection against an H5N1 flu strain. This strategic stockpile could be used as a first line of defence for priority groups, such as NHS workers, while a vaccine against the exact flu strain is manufactured. Experts will also be able to carry out further clinical studies on the H5N1 vaccine to learn more about how it works against the virus.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment has been made of the risk to the UK from avian influenza. [15765]

Caroline Flint: Avian influenza (bird 'flu) is continuing to circulate in South East Asia and other countries. In the period of December 2003 to September 2005, this H5N1 strain of the flu virus has infected 115 people in four countries, 59 of whom have died. In order for the avian flu to develop into a pandemic, the virus would need to mutate to become more transmissible between people. To date, there have been very few examples of person-to-person spread. However, the World Health Organization (WHO) has indicated that the evidence suggests that "the viruses are continuing to evolve and pose a pandemic threat".

Once a pandemic has emerged and spread beyond the source country the likelihood of the United Kingdom remaining unaffected is extremely remote. That is why we published the UK influenza pandemic contingency plan in March 2005 and are continuing to develop preparedness plans. We are also working with countries and institutions internationally to share and develop our planning.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much H5N1 vaccine is to be stockpiled in London; and if she will make a statement. [15138]

Caroline Flint: On 20 July, we invited manufacturers to tender for a contract to supply a limited amount of H5N1 vaccine and we propose to purchase between 2 and 4 million doses for the United Kingdom. This strategic stockpile could be used for research or as a first line of defence for priority groups, such as National health service workers, while a vaccine against the exact flu strain is manufactured. This vaccine may provide some limited protection against pandemic influenza, if the pandemic arose from the H5N1 strain.

Individuals would be offered it if the risk of a pandemic increased significantly and supplies would be distributed to regions when and if this decision is made.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her strategy is for promoting the awareness of carbon monoxide poisoning. [16513]

Caroline Flint: The Chief Medical Officer will be issuing a reminder about carbon dioxide poisoning in his "CMO Update" this month, when people start heating their homes. This will be followed by the publication of an information leaflet for distribution via general practitioner surgeries.

The Department works in collaboration with other Government Departments on the issue of carbon monoxide poisoning. We work with the Health and Safety Executive on the issue of CORGI registered engineers, and with the Department of Trade and Industry on the issues around product standards.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which voluntary organisations who provide support and advice for people and their families who have been affected by carbon monoxide poisoning she has supported through section 64 grants in each of the last three years; and what amounts were granted in each case. [16516]

Caroline Flint: The two voluntary organisations providing support and advice for people and their families who have been affected by carbon monoxide poisoning, supported through section 64 funding are the Carbon Monoxide and Gas Safety Society (CO-Gas Safety) and the Air Information Research Safety and You (AIRSAY).

CO-Gas Safety has been provided with core funding of £35,000 in 2004–05 and £16,000 in 2005–06. AIRSAY has been granted funding for its project, "New Approach to Fossil Fuel Poisoning", of £30,000 per annum for 2005–06 and the following two years.

Child Choking Incidents

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what mechanism the Department has set up to count the number of child choking incidents, to replace the Home Accident Surveillance System. [15926]

Caroline Flint: Data on in-patient admissions of children to national health service hospitals in England following a choking incident is collected in the hospital episode statistics (HES) system. This only covers choking incidents serious enough to warrant admission to hospital as an in-patient.

From the 2003–04 data year, a data set from NHS accident and emergency departments has been collected centrally and included in the HES system. The data are being analysed by the public health observatories on our behalf. There are currently problems with the quality of

the data, and with the level of participation by individual trusts. The data set cannot currently identify choking incidents as a separate category. We are considering how the data set may be used in future for injury surveillance, including choking incidents.

Congenital Heart Conditions

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in the Portsmouth NHS Trust area are identified as having a grown-up congenital heart condition; and which is the nearest dedicated in-hospital unit available to them. [16508]

Caroline Flint: Information is not collected centrally on the number of people in the Portsmouth NHS Trust area who are identified as having a grown-up congenital heart condition (GUCH).

The Wessex regional cardiac centre at Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust, Southampton is the nearest dedicated in-hospital unit providing services for congenital heart disease, including GUCH.

Contagious Diseases

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on her policy towards international co-operation to tackle contagion; if she will list the powers she holds to ban entry from named countries where outbreaks of disease occur; and what her policy is on repatriation of UK nationals from such countries during an outbreak. [16705]

Caroline Flint: The United Kingdom Government works closely with international partners, including the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, to tackle infectious diseases. It has implemented WHO's International Health Regulations (IHR), which were agreed in 1969 and subsequently amended and which are designed to prevent the international spread of infectious disease. In common with other WHO members it is currently considering implementation of the new IHR adopted by WHO in May this year.

In addition, the UK Government have participated in exercises with international partners to test plans for the handling of outbreaks of infectious disease such as smallpox and plague. Exercises on the handling of smallpox and pandemic influenza will take place with European Union partners later this month and in November.

There are no powers in health legislation to ban entry to the UK. Once an infected or infectious person has reached a country, there could be risks to other travellers in merely banning his entry and taking no action to prevent his infecting others. Accordingly, the current IHR provide, among other things, for the medical examination of travellers (Article 36) and for infected travellers to be isolated (Article 38) or put under surveillance (Article 39). Those provisions are reflected in England (and Wales) in the Public Health (Aircraft) Regulations 1979 and the Public Health (Ships) Regulations 1979.

Repatriation of UK nationals is a matter for my right hon. Friend, the Foreign Secretary (Mr. Straw). If a serious outbreak were to occur, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, in close consultation with the Department would issue travel advice offering guidance to UK nationals on travel to and from the affected country.

Family Support Services

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the cost of providing family support services from social services departments for adults who have previously been in care in the last year for which figures are available. [15708]

Mr. Byrne: No estimate has been made of the cost of providing family support services.

The Department provides the financial resources needed by local authorities to deliver their adults' personal social services commitments and most appropriately meet the needs of the local community.

The Department allocates funding for personal social services (PSS) based on relative need. Each local authority is allocated a small proportion of their required funding through specific direct grants from the Department. The larger proportion comes through the formula spending share (FSS) and the Office of Deputy Prime Minister allocates this to local authorities (LAs) relative to factors such as population and levels of deprivation.

While the Department is responsible for establishing overall social care policy, it is for LAs to manage the provision of services from social services departments for adults who have previously been in care, in accordance with locally determined priorities.

Grown-up Congenital Heart Patient Unit (Southampton)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* staffing levels and *(b)* budget are of the Grown-Up Congenital Heart Patient Unit in the Wessex Cardiothoracic Unit at the Southampton University Hospital NHS Trust; and what the forecast is for the next three years. [16507]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Hepatitis C

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessments her Department has made of the prevalence of undiagnosed hepatitis C in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* other European countries; and what assessment she has made of the capacity for treating hepatitis C. [15720]

Caroline Flint: It is estimated that there are 200,000 people with chronic hepatitis C infection in England. Since surveillance began in 1992, there have been around 46,500 laboratory diagnoses of hepatitis C reported to the Health Protection Agency (HPA), which suggests that the majority of those infected have not been diagnosed. The number of reported laboratory diagnoses of hepatitis C has risen markedly from 4,665 in 2001 to 7,843[1] in 2004, which may reflect increased awareness.

There are emerging indications from sentinel surveillance of hepatitis C laboratory diagnoses by the HPA that there may be a significant level of under-reporting of laboratory diagnoses and that the number of people who have been diagnosed is higher than suggested by the reports received.

We have not made a specific assessment of the prevalence of undiagnosed chronic hepatitis C infection in other European countries.

The provision of treatment for hepatitis C is a matter for local national health service organisations taking account of guidance from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence.

[1] Provisional figure

IVF Treatment

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what recent representations she has received about the variance in IVF treatment offered by primary care trusts; [16510]

(2) if she will commission research into the amount of provision of IVF treatment by each individual primary care trust; [16511]

(3) what the timetable is for the full implementation of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence clinical guideline on treatment and assessment of people with fertility problems. [16512]

Caroline Flint: This year, we have received 236 letters and 25 questions from hon. and right hon. Members about the provision of in vitro fertilisation treatment. It is for each primary care trust, in liaison with local health bodies and patient groups, to make decisions on the implementation of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence's (NICE) guideline on fertility treatment, taking resources and local health care priorities into account. The extent to which NHS organisations comply with national guidance is considered by the Healthcare Commission during its review and performance assessment process. We have not set a time frame for the full implementation of the NICE guideline, though we have made clear that we expect the NHS to make progress towards it in the longer term.

Little Havens Children's Hospice

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much NHS funding will be made available to Little Havens Children's Hospice in *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* 2006–07. [15603]

Mr. Byrne: Children's hospice services are funded from a number of sources, including services commissioned by primary care trusts (PCTs) based on their assessment of children's needs and their priorities. They are best placed to make decisions on the local need for palliative care and are able to take into account the needs of individual families and their preferences. Local hospices need to engage their PCTs in the commissioning process. PCTs have received substantial increases in their baseline funding and there is no ceiling on the amount of funding they can provide for children's palliative care.

The information requested is not collected centrally. However, I understand that Castle Point and Rochford PCT, on behalf of all five PCTs in South Essex, gave Little Havens Hospice funding that totalled £30,197 in 2005–06. It is envisaged a similar amount will be available in 2006–07.

Live Births/Abortions (Essex)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* live births and *(b)* abortions there were in (i) Essex and (ii) Bedford and Hertfordshire strategic health authority in each year since 1976. [15628]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is shown in the table.

Total number of abortions and live births for residents of Essex[a] and Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire[b] 1976–2004

	Essex[a]		*Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire[b]*	
	Abortions	*Live births*	*Abortions*	*Live births*
1976	[1]2666	[6]17879	[9]2962	[10]17968
1977	2763	17244	2924	17834
1978	2954	17958	3486	18894
1979	3230	19177	3654	20136
1980	3366	19607	3902	20638
1981	[2]n/a	19032	[9]3851	19897
1982	n/a	18140	3593	19265
1983	[3]1805	18267	3677	19340
1984	1997	18767	4198	19533
1985	2074	18953	4253	19870
1986	1879	19280	4381	20517
1987	2003	20253	4361	20971
1988	2462	20594	4788	21760
1989	2524	20411	4858	21424
1990	2447	20760	4801	21756
1991	2532	20556	4623	21566
1992	2386	20385	[10]4102	21853
1993	[4]4260	20275	[11]4301	21595
1994	4031	19919	[12]4143	21578
1995	3903	19162	4224	20750
1996	4359	19214	[13]4581	20872
1997	4503	19181	4907	[17]20776
1998	4945	[7]19097	5012	20802
1999	4586	18752	5255	20398
2000	4667	17919	4995	20281
2001	4663	17784	[14]5028	20029
2002	[5]4626	17827	[15]5045	19842
2003	4772	18451	5466	20552
2004	4897	18887	5203	20904

[a] There were boundary changes in Essex and comparable data in some years are not available.

[1] Essex area health authority 1975–1980.

[2] Comparative data for Essex not available 1981–82.

[3] Includes district health authorities for Mid-Essex, North East and West Essex from 1983 to 1992.

[4] Includes health authorities for North Essex and South Essex from 1993 to 2001.

[5] Essex strategic health authority. From 2002, includes primary care organisations for Basildon, Billericay, Brentwood and Wickford, Castle Point and Rochford, Chelmsford, Colchester,

Epping Forest, Harlow, Maldon and South Chelmsford, Southend on Sea, Tendring, Thurrock, Uttlesford, Witham, Braintree and Halstead.

[6] Essex County 1976–1997.

[7] Includes Southend and Thurrock, Unitary authorities.

[8] There were boundary changes in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire and comparable data in some years are not available.

[9] Includes Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire area health authorities 1975–1980.

[9] Includes district health authorities for Northern Bedfordshire, Southern Bedfordshire, North Hertfordshire, East Hertfordshire, North West Hertfordshire and South West Hertfordshire 1981–1991.

[10] Includes North Bedfordshire, South Bedfordshire, North West Hertfordshire, South West Hertfordshire district health authorities in 1992.

[11] Includes North Bedfordshire, South Bedfordshire, North West Hertfordshire, South West Hertfordshire and East and North Hertfordshire district health authorities in 1993.

[12] Includes Bedfordshire, North West Hertfordshire, South West Hertfordshire and East and North Hertfordshire district health authorities 1994–1995.

[13] Includes Bedfordshire, West Hertfordshire and East and North Hertfordshire Health Authorities 1996–2000.

[14] Includes Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire health authorities in 2001.

[15] Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire strategic health authority. From 2002 includes primary care organisations for Bedford, Bedfordshire Heartlands, Dacorum, Hertsmere, Luton, Northern Hertfordshire and Stevenage, Royston, Buntingford and Bishop's Stortford, South East Hertfordshire, St Albans and Harpenden, Watford and Three Rivers, Welwyn Hatfield.

[16] Includes Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire counties 1976–1996.

[17] Includes Luton unitary authority and Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire counties in 1997–2004.

Sources:

Data for abortions supplied by SD3G, Department of Health.

Data for live births supplied by the Office for National Statistics.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many women in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Bedford and Hertfordshire strategic health authority had an abortion in each of the last five years for which figures are available who already had had (i) one, (ii) two, (iii) three, (iv) four and (v) five previous abortions. [15470]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is shown in the table.

Number of previous terminations to women resident in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire and Essex strategic health authority (SHA) having terminations in 2002, 2003 and 2004.

	SHA	Number of previous terminations 0	1	2	3	4+
2002	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	3,562	1,111	287	62	20
2003	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	3,745	1,323	292	77	29
2004	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	3,571	1,239	309	53	31
2002	Essex	3,207	995	246	54	30
2003	Essex	3,347	1,075	264	59	27
2004	Essex	3,411	1,106	268	77	35

Notes:

1. Prior to 2002, information was published by health authority and boundaries have changed.

2. Numbers for five previous terminations are less than 10 and therefore too small to release, in accordance with guidance from the Office of National Statistics.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list each method of abortion used in hospitals in England, broken down by *(a)* gestation limit and *(b)* date of introduction; and if she will make a statement. [15650]

Caroline Flint: The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists' (RCOG's) evidence-based clinical guideline, "The Care of Women Requesting Induced Abortion (2004)", sets out the recommended methods of abortion for each gestation band which practitioners are expected to follow.

Methods of termination are monitored through the forms sent to the Chief Medical Officer by practitioners for every termination of pregnancy they perform. A list of methods of abortion used in hospitals in England and Wales, by gestation, is contained within the statistical bulletin 2005/11 "Abortion Statistics, England and Wales: 2004", which is available on the Department website at www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/75/04117574.pdf. Copies are also available in the Library.

We do not hold information on when individual methods were introduced.

Mental Health

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her estimate is of the number of 11 to 19-year-olds who are suffering from a mental illness. [16440]

Mr. Byrne: Information is not available in the format requested. In a 2004 survey of children and adolescents by the Office for National Statistics, "Mental Health of Children and Young People in Great Britain, August 2005", it was found that among 11 to 16-year-olds, the prevalence of mental disorders was 11.5 per cent.

Prevalence rates for individual disorders are shown in the report, which is available in the Library.

In addition the report, "Psychiatric Morbidity among adults in private households", which was published in 2000, gave the prevalence of neurotic disorders among 16 to 19-year-olds as 133 per thousand of population.

Nutrition and Health (EU Regulation)

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what benefits for public health are anticipated from the EU regulation of nutrition and health claims made on foods (2003/0165 COM). [15523]

Caroline Flint: The proposed regulation seeks to address the use in the labelling and advertising of foods of nutrition claims, such as "low fat" and "sugar free", and health claims such as "helps maintain a healthy heart" and "good for your bones". Such claims can be useful in helping consumers make healthy eating choices, but only if the claims are true and not presented in a way which undermines advice on healthy diets and lifestyles. At a time when there is increased concern over obesity and diet related diseases, such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes, an appropriate level of control over nutrition and health claims is of clear public health benefit.

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what criteria will be used to assess whether a brand name or trademark on a food product will be permitted under the proposed EU regulation of nutrition and health claims (2003/0165 COM). [15524]

Caroline Flint: The proposed regulation would affect those brand names or trademarks which are also nutrition or health claims, based on the definitions in the

proposal. However, the regulation, as proposed by the European Union, would exempt such trademarks and brand names from undergoing a specific assessment and authorisation if the food product also carries an approved and relevant nutrition or health claim.

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to produce a full regulatory impact assessment for the regulation of nutrition and health claims made on foods (EU 2003/0165 COM). [15525]

Caroline Flint: In line with the Cabinet Office Code of Practice on Consultations, regulatory impact assessments are published with our consultations on regulatory proposals. In the case of European Union regulations, which are directly applicable in the law of all member states, a regulatory impact assessment is produced to aid negotiations in Brussels and is developed as the policy process continues. For the regulation on nutrition and health claims made on foods we expect to produce the full regulatory impact assessment when the final text has been agreed. This is expected in the summer of next year.

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the likely impact of the EU regulation of health claims and nutrition (2003/0165 COM) on endorsements of health food products by doctors and other health care professionals. [15526]

Caroline Flint: The proposed regulation would prohibit health claims made in the labelling, presentation or advertising of foods by individual doctors and health professionals, but not their national medical associations. The regulation does not apply to other advice, such as recommendations made orally, given by such doctors or other health professionals.

Primary Care Trusts (Hampshire/Isle of Wight)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the financial position of each primary care trust in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight is; and if she will make a statement. [16864]

Caroline Flint: The figures for each primary care trust (PCT) in Hampshire and Isle of Wight Strategic Health Authority are shown in the table. The figures have been taken from the 2004–05 final accounts.

£000

PCT name	Under/(Over) spend
Blackwater Valley and Hart	(2,676)
East Hampshire	(5,199)
Eastleigh and Test Valley South	(1,283)
Fareham and Gosport	(6,757)
Isle of Wight	(361)
Mid-Hampshire	(826)
New Forest	(8,592)
North Hampshire	(890)
Portsmouth City Teaching	17
Southampton City	0

Pulmonary Rehabilitation

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what her policy is on the provision of secure funding for a comprehensive pulmonary rehabilitation programme in *(a)* Birmingham, *(b)* Birmingham and the Black Country strategic health authority area and *(c)* England; [16390]

(2) how many people in Birmingham are living with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease; and what percentage of those people have access to pulmonary rehabilitation; [16391]

(3) what progress has been made on the implementation of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidelines on the management of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease in primary and secondary care in *(a)* Birmingham, *(b)* Birmingham and the Black Country strategic health authority area and *(c)* England. [16392]

Mr. Byrne: In England, primary care trusts (PCTs) are responsible for determining which health services their local population requires, and ensuring the provision of these services. It is therefore the responsibility of individual PCTs to decide the level of funding they allocate to services for pulmonary rehabilitation.

Data on the prevalence of individual medical conditions are not collected centrally, nor does the Department collect figures on the number of people treated for a particular condition in a way that enables an estimate to be made.

Clinical guidelines from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) are reflected in the standards published by the Department, which provide a framework for continuous improvement in the overall quality of care people receive. Clinical guidelines are covered by the developmental standards, standards which the national health service is expected to achieve over time. The Healthcare Commission has responsibility for assessing progress towards achieving these standards.

Sub-standard Housing

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate her Department has made of the cost to the NHS of treating physical and psychological illness arising from sub-standard housing in the last period for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [15646]

Caroline Flint: No such assessment has been made.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will discuss with the Deputy Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs joint action to tackle adverse health effects resulting from poorly heated and poorly insulated housing; and if she will make a statement. [15647]

Caroline Flint: The United Kingdom fuel poverty strategy is a cross-Government strategy. Although the lead Departments are the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Department of Health, along with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Department of Work and Pensions, are closely involved in its implementation. There is regular contact between Ministers and officials of all these Departments to

ensure this. This Department of Health takes its contribution very seriously; its specific policies and actions include:

Flu and pneumococcal immunisation programmes. The UK has the highest uptake of" 'flu immunisation among eligible groups of any in Europe.

The "Keep Warm Keep Well" campaign, launched this year with the "flu immunisation campaign, and comprising leaflet and helpline-based advice on what simple measures older people can take to preserve their health in winter time. How to access "Warm Front" and other fuel poverty reducing agencies is part of this.

Direct encouragement to the national health service to increase further the many fuel poverty reduction partnerships between the NHS, local authorities and, for example, Eaga Partnership Ltd. These lead to primary care staff being trained and supported, simplified referral routes—sometimes including a single telephone number, and rapid response from "Warm Front" and others. It is worth noting that the overwhelming majority of referrals to "Warm Front" originate from the NHS.

In 2003, collaborating with the Health Development Agency in commissioning from the National Heart Forum, Eaga, the Faculty of Public Health, Help the Aged, and the Met. Office the "Fuel Poverty and Health Toolkit".

Funding the evaluation of an important collaboration between the NHS and the Met. Office, testing the value of health forecasting in the management and self-management of those with chronic chest disease,

Contributing to the funding for the evaluation of the health impact of "Warm Front".

Helping to set up the health, housing and fuel poverty forum in March 2005, to raise the profile of cold, damp homes and to mainstream the many innovative activities the NHS is engaged in to address this issue.

Establishing the £60 million "Partnerships for Older People Projects" fund, against which local authorities and their partners have been bidding this year. The focus of these projects is on improving outcomes for older people through preventive interventions. Fuel poverty reduction forms a part in several of the short-listed bids.

Sustainable Development

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action relating to sustainable development is *(a)* required and *(b)* undertaken by her Department's (i) executive agencies, (ii) advisory non-departmental bodies, (iii) executive non-departmental bodies, (iv) tribunals, (v) public corporations and (vi) other bodies. [15180]

Caroline Flint: The Department monitors action relating to sustainable development in only two of its Agencies—the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the National Health Service Purchasing and Supply Agency (NHS PASA). They are required to take actions set out in the United Kingdom sustainable development strategy, Securing the Future, and are required to meet the commitments set out in the framework for sustainable development on the Government estate, which is currently under review.

The remainder of the Department's bodies are required under the UK's sustainable development strategy to take appropriate actions to cover their operations and their policy. These agencies have their own reporting arrangements. However, sponsors of departmental agencies and other bodies are encouraged to adopt the Department's approach to sustainable development operations and targets, as set out in the framework for the Government estate.

NHS PASA consistently delivers on its actions, particularly around sustainable procurement and reports every year on its progress.

The Department's estate includes the MHRA's main building and as such controls their sustainable development activity along with its own. Progress is set out in the "Sustainable Development in Government" questionnaire, published by the Sustainable Development Commission.

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what are identified as the most significant sustainable development impacts in relation to the operation of her Department's estate; and what steps have been taken to review arrangements for public reporting of such impacts. [15435]

Caroline Flint: The Department's estate consists mainly of administrative offices. The most significant sustainable development impacts are water and energy consumption, waste production, and travel.

The Department reports its sustainable development impacts on the departmental website, reviewing the data regularly to ensure they are relevant and up to date. These arrangements are kept under review.

Watermark Project

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether her Department has joined the Watermark project. [15463]

Caroline Flint: The Department was an early member of the Watermark scheme but is not currently a member.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 13 October 2005

TREASURY

Tax Credits

2. **Michael Jabez Foster:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many recipients of working tax credit and child tax credit there are in Hastings and Rye constituency. [17038]

Dawn Primarolo: The average number of in-work families in Hastings and Rye with a 2003–04 finalised tax credit award was 7,300, Of these 6,900 were families with children, while 400 were families without children.

19. **Mr. Atkinson:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the level of overpayment of tax credits in the last 12 months. [17056]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates of numbers and values of overpayments or underpayments for 2004–05 awards at 5April 2005 will not be available until after family circumstances and incomes for 2004–05 have been finalised.

VAT

13. **Bob Russell:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what response he has made to English Heritage's representations for a 5 per cent. value added tax for all building work. [17050]

John Healey: I am aware of English Heritage representations and wrote to them on the subject when they raised it with me in 2003. All representations are considered as part of the Budget process.

Creative Innovation

14. **Mr. Sheerman:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what financial incentives he has introduced to encourage innovation in the creative industries. [17051]

Mr. Des Browne: The R and D tax credit for SMEs was introduced in 2000 to encourage commercial innovation. The scheme was extended to all companies in 2002, and to date nearly £1.4 billion of Government support has been claimed.

New Deal and Welfare to Work

15. **Mr. Havard:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on public investment in the new deal and welfare to work measures. [17052]

Mr. Des Browne: Since 1997, this Government has invested over £3 billion in New Deal, helping nearly 1.4 million people into work, and contributing to a 600,000 fall in unemployment, and to over 2 million more people in work.

Economic Cycle

16. **Mr. Gauke:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the Treasury's reassessment of the beginning of the economic cycle. [17053]

John Healey: As set out in chapter 4 of the Treasury publication 'Evidence on the UK Economic Cycle' (July 2005), the Treasury's revised judgment, based on new evidence from revised national accounts data, is that the current economic cycle began in the first half of 1997, rather than in 1999. This conclusion is corroborated by other new data and analysis cited in the paper.

International Finance Facility

17. **Mr. Bailey:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on progress towards an international finance facility [17054]

John Healey: The IFF is supported by more than 80 countries, including France, Italy, Sweden, Brazil, China, and South Africa, as well as the UN and other international organisations, faith leaders and NGOs.

As a first step towards launching a full IFF, on 9 September the UK, France, Italy, Spain, and Sweden launched a pilot IFF for Immunisation (IFFIm). Using the frontloading principles and mechanisms of the main IFF to generate new resources, the IFFIm could save the lives of an estimated five million children before 2015.

Government Borrowing

18. **Mr. Scott:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what assessment he has made of the effect of the level of Government net borrowing on projected levels of taxation over the next five years; [17055]

21. **Mr. Harper:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what assessment he has made of the effect of the level of Government net borrowing on the projected levels of taxation over the next five years. [17058]

Mr. Des Browne: Budget 2005 set out the Government's latest projections for tax receipts. Updated estimates will be published in the Pre-Budget Report.

Steel Prices

20. **Mr. Simon:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effects of steel prices on the British economy; and if he will make a statement. [17057]

Mr. Des Browne: Higher steel prices tend to raise production costs and thus have a small adverse effect on economic activity, though UK exporters may have benefited from the strong world demand that has been driving steel prices. Thanks to the domestic macroeconomic stability that this Government's

macroeconomic frameworks have delivered, the UK economy is much better placed than in the past to deal with challenges posed by the global economy, including those arising from high commodity prices.

Revenue and Customs Merger

22. **Mr. Swire:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the progress of the merger of the Inland Revenue and HM Customs and Excise. [17059]

Dawn Primarolo: The merger of Inland Revenue and HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) took place successfully on 18 April 2005 through the legal merger of its two predecessor departments.

Since then HMRC has created and implemented a new organisational structure designed to deliver better service to customers, new approaches to compliance, information and resources and efficiency, through economies of scale and transformational change.

The new structure has more focus on HMRC customers and their needs. It requires more collegiate, interactive behaviours, which the organisation is developing. Early customer service benefits include an improved service to individuals through the introduction of a short tax return issued to 1.5 million individuals this year; the removal of over 1 million people with relatively simple affairs from the self assessment net; the reduction, by half, of the number of tax leaflets; and the rewriting of all leaflets and explanatory notes to make them simpler and easier to understand. Benefits to business customers include the phasing out of payment of tax credits by employers saving those businesses around £103 million in the first year. By next March 120,000 businesses will no longer have to administer tax credits for their employers.

Child Poverty

23. **Anne Snelgrove:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps the Government are taking to reduce child poverty in the UK. [17061]

Dawn Primarolo: This Government have committed to halve child poverty by 2010 and to eradicate it in a generation.

Between the mid 1970s and mid 1990s, child poverty more than doubled, and in 1997 child poverty was higher in the UK than anywhere else in the EU. We have already, through the new deal, the minimum wage, through the child tax credit and through public services, lifted more than half a million children out of poverty.

Last summer, the Child Poverty Review set out strategy to lift another 1 million children out of poverty by 2010–11:

helping more people who want to work find work, and making work pay;

providing financial support to help all families with the costs of bringing up children, and giving most help to those who need it most;

building on the success of Sure Start by implementing a 10-Year Strategy for Childcare, with a Children's Centre offering integrated children's services in every community;

and investing in our children's future so that by 2007–08 total funding for schools will be 60 per cent. higher in real terms than in 1996–97.

Correspondence

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Paymaster General will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Walsall, North of 5 September regarding a constituent. [17102]

Dawn Primarolo: I have done so.

Insurance Premium Tax/Fraud

Gregory Barker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has received regarding the insurance premium tax; and what steps he is taking to combat fraud in the tax system. [17290]

John Healey: In the last year a small number of letters have been received by Treasury Ministers about Insurance Premium Tax (IPT) Including representations about non-payment of IPT which have been Investigated by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

HMRC is continuing to develop a risk-based compliance strategy to ensure that the Department's resources are targeted most effectively at key risk areas.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Early-day Motions

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission if the Commission will initiate steps to enable hon. Members *(a)* to table and *(b)* to sign early-day motions electronically. [16956]

Nick Harvey: The Commission would need the authority of a decision by the House in order to make funds available for an extension of electronic tabling of this sort. The present system of tabling questions electronically was introduced following recommendations of the Procedure Committee (Parliamentary Questions, Third Report of Session 2001–02, HC 622, paragraphs 83 to 96). These recommendations were approved by the House on 29 October 2002.

I have drawn this exchange to the attention of the hon. Member for Macclesfield (Sir Nicholas Winterton) as Chairman of the Procedure Committee; my hon. Friend may also wish to approach that Committee directly.

House Employees

Sarah Teather: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how many staff are employed by the House, broken down by *(a)* gender and *(b)* ethnicity. [16902]

Nick Harvey: In September 2005 the number of individual staff, including part-time staff, on the House of Commons staff payroll was 1,698, of whom 921 were

male and 777 were female. Information on ethnicity of staff who have declared their ethnicity during survey work over the past two years is:

Ethnicity	*Number of staff*
White	1,323
Asian	91
Chinese	8
Black	166
Mixed	7
Other	34

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Business Rates

Dr. Cable: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many appeals were made against business rate valuations in 2004; how many were upheld; and what the *(a)* average and *(b)* maximum waiting time was for a valuation appeal. [16975]

Mr. Woolas: The Valuation Office Agency received 135,387 appeals, against assessments in the 2000 Rating List, between 1 January 2004 and 31 December 2004. 97,412 appeals received in this period have now been settled and 29,067 of these were upheld, according to the figures available as at 31 August 2005.

The average time taken to settle these appeals by agreement or well founding is 278 days. The average time taken to settle appeals, which went to the Valuation Tribunal Service for a decision, is 373 days.

The maximum time taken to settle these appeals by agreement or well founding is 601 days. The maximum time taken to settle appeals, which went to the Valuation Tribunal Service for a decision, is 575 days.

Fire Service

John McDonnell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the *(a)* Firelink Project and *(b)* FireControl Project will enable the transfer of Fire and Rescue Service command and control functions to regional level in England. [16952]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Firelink project will provide a communications conduit from the control room to Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) vehicles which will be integrated with the common control system for all English FRSs provided by the FiReControl project. The FiReControl technology would allow regional command arrangements, but operational command arrangements will remain the responsibility of the chief fire officers of individual fire and rescue services.

John McDonnell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the *(a)* FireControl Project and *(b)* Firelink Project will provide inter-operable voice communications at gold command level between the Fire and Rescue Service and (i) the Police Service and (ii) the Ambulance Service. [16953]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Firelink wide area radio system will provide interoperable voice communication between the primary emergency services at gold and silver command levels.

John McDonnell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how far out to sea radio coverage will be provided under the Firelink Project; what effect this will have on the proposals for firefighting at sea set out in the document Sea of Change; and if he will make a statement. [16954]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The extent to which Firelink provides coverage at sea will depend on the supplier selected. An announcement about that is envisaged shortly. The Firelink project is not however intended for use with Sea of Change operations. Sea of Change communications will be carried out primarily using VHF marine band frequencies for operations within 30 miles of the shore or by satellite communications for distant operations or on those occasions when VHF proves inadequate. All Sea of Change operations are co-ordinated by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency sponsored by the Department for Transport.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Gale: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to implement the results of the 2001 census in determining funding for county authorities in the South East. [17060]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minster consulted on changes to the local government finance formula grant distribution system during the summer. The use of 2001 census data in the funding formula is included in the proposals that we have consulted on.

We will consider fully all the responses that we received to the consultation before making final decisions on the 2006–07 Local Government Finance Settlement.

TRANSPORT

A1

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the status of proposals for the upgrading of the A1 to motorway status between Dishforth and Barton. [17362]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency is currently analysing the responses received following the public consultation into the A1 Dishforth to Barton upgrade scheme with a view to publishing draft orders early next year.

Emergency Telephones

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many emergency telephones are in place on *(a)* trunk roads and *(b)* motorways in England and Wales; what the distance in miles between each one is; and if he will make a statement. [17001]

Dr. Ladyman: There are about 300 emergency telephones on the all-purpose trunk road network and 6,100 on motorways in England for which the Secretary of State for Transport is responsible. Telephones on two and three lane-motorways are spaced at approximately one mile intervals and at intervals of 0.6 mile on motorways with more than three lanes. Telephones on trunk roads are located where there is an identified need.

On the M42 in the West Midlands, Active Traffic Management will be piloted from December. This includes the use of the hard shoulder as a running lane at busy times and emergency telephones will be installed in refuge areas at 500 metre intervals.

Roads in Wales are the responsibility of the Welsh Assembly or the relevant local highway authority. Other roads in England that are not part of the trunk road network are the responsibility of the local highway authorities.

Tachographs

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) whether the *(a)* Department and *(b)* Vehicle and Operator Services Agency's predecessor made representations relating to the English text of EU regulations (i) 3821/85 and (ii) 2135/98 before they were published in the *Official Journal*; [17518]

(2) what discussions were held between the Vehicle Operators Services Agency and *(a)* road haulage companies and *(b)* coach operators prior to the implementation of EU regulation 3821/85. [17522]

Dr. Ladyman: Council Regulation (EEC) No. 3821/85, requiring various drivers to use a tachograph to record their daily activities, was adopted nearly twenty years ago. Information regarding representations made prior to publication of the regulation, or discussions with industry regarding its implementation, is not readily available.

Council Regulation (EC) No. 2135/98 amended the earlier regulation. Again, records relating to negotiation of this regulation are not readily available. However, apparent discrepancies (relating to the retention of records by the driver) between the English and other texts have come to light subsequently. Officials have raised these discrepancies with the European Commission.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many prohibitions have been issued by the Vehicle Operator Services Agency for breaches of EU Regulation 3821/85 since commencement. [17519]

Dr. Ladyman: The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) was formed on 1 April 2003. VOSA have issued the following number of prohibitions for breaches of EU Regulation 3821/85:

	Prohibitions
2003–04	1149
2004–05	1200
2005–06 (½ year only)	770

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received from drivers and operators of heavy vehicles about the implementation of EU Regulation 3821/85. [17521]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department for Transport and its agencies receive a large number of queries each year about the application of this 1985 European regulation (which requires many heavy vehicles to be fitted with a device to record driving hours and specifies how records should be used). These queries are largely of a technical nature.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps have been taken to advise heavy vehicle drivers and operators that the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency uses the French text of EU Regulation 3821/85 (as amended), in preference to the English text, when enforcing the requirement for coach and lorry drivers to produce tachograph discs at roadside checks. [17713]

Dr. Ladyman: Discrepancies between the English and French texts of Council Regulation (EEC) No. 3821/85 (as amended) occurred during translation. The resulting English text suggested, incorrectly, that requirements for drivers to be able to produce records were less stringent than had previously been the case. However, the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) and DfT have consistently taken the line that, in fact, there has been no change in this requirement. This interpretation is reflected in DfT/VOSA guidance.

General Lighthouse Fund

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received from the Government of the Republic of Ireland regarding the cessation of payments from the UK General Lighthouse Fund for the provision of navigational aids in Irish territorial waters. [16115]

Dr. Ladyman: We have received no representations from the Irish Government on this matter. However, in March we secured a commitment from the Irish Government to renegotiate the 1985 Agreement which sets out the funding arrangements for the Commissioners of Lights and the provision of navigational aids for the whole of the island of Ireland.

Left-hand Drive Limousines

Jessica Morden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will allow left-hand drive limousines to be issued with a certificate of initial fitness so that they can be certified as passenger service vehicles. [17762]

Dr. Ladyman: Left-hand drive limousines are already allowed to be issued with a certificate of initial fitness if they conform with the requirements of the Public Service Vehicles (conditions of fitness, equipment, use and certification) Regulations 1981. However, most are unlikely to qualify due to other aspects of their design.

M5

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his latest estimate is of the costs incurred by the Highways Agency in making alterations to Junction 14 of the M5. [17023]

Dr. Ladyman: The latest cost of the works to Junction 14 on the M5 is £781,327, which includes final payments for the engineering works.

Road Fatalities (Hornsey and Wood Green)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the number of

road fatalities in Hornsey and Wood Green constituency in each of the last 10 years; what the average for London boroughs was in each year; and if he will make a statement. [16991]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is in the following table.

Fatalities in personal injury road accidents: 1995–2004

	Constituency of Hornsey and Wood Green[1]	*Average for the London boroughs*[2]
1995	2	6
1996	9	8
1997	4	8
1998	0	7
1999	0	8
2000	2	9
2001	1	9
2002	3	9
2003	9	8
2004	1	7

[1] Based on 2004 boundaries.
[2] Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Science and Engineering

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what steps the Government are taking to make parents aware of the opportunities that exist for girls in science and engineering. [16355]

Meg Munn: The Department has a £6.9 million contract with the UK Resource Centre for Women (UKRC), to promote SET (science, engineering, technology) skills for women. The UKRC is affiliated with, and provides guidance to, (Joint Innovation) JIVE Partners, an organisation which has delivered staff training to over 400 careers professionals and is now working with teachers. The importance of involvement with parents is stressed within this training. JIVE's newly published How To Guide on Careers Advice (SET for Girls) also stresses the involvement of parents in careers events and organised activities.

DTI is supporting the science, engineering, technology and maths network (SETNET) for the next three years with funding in excess of £10 million. Through its work with schools, SETNET comes into regular contact with parents, for example through family learning days and careers roadshows. SETNET runs the Science Engineering Ambassadors (SEAs) scheme, in which young scientists act as role models for school students.

SEAs work with parents to give them the information they need to encourage their children (of both genders and all ethnic backgrounds) to look at the opportunities available to them. There are now nearly 11,000 ambassadors, of which over 50 per cent. are under 35 and 38 per cent. are women.

The computer club for girls initiative (CC4G) is supported by DfES. It is run within schools and aims to transform the attitudes of girls towards technology-related careers. Parents have to give their consent to this extra curricular activity and are kept informed of their children's progress.

DTI also sponsors the Royal Academy of Engineering (RAEng) and the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BA). The RAEng is currently extending its extra-curricula support for girls in science and engineering. The HEADSTART scheme creates opportunities for girls to attend summer schools at universities. Making these all-girls events removes a potential barrier to access for some faith groups. Parents are directly involved at the start and finish of this scheme. Another new scheme (the London Engineering Project (LEP)) will take curriculum enrichment into inner-city schools where care will be taken to make all events gender appropriate in terms of choice of engineering theme, approaches and materials. Encouraging active parent participation will be a key element for LEP. The BA CREST Award scheme offers girls (and boys) opportunities to take part directly in scientific research and engineering projects. This scheme includes a range of presentations and events through which parents are encouraged to keep up-to-date with their children's work.

In addition, the DTI supports initiatives such as the WISE Campaign (Women Into Science and Engineering). WISE have produced a booklet entitled "Engineering Equals" which includes advice for parents, and includes action lists, places to visit, and reading material to encourage girls into science, engineering and technology. WISE's work with girls also brings them into direct contact with parents, e.g. through residential courses where the parents are invited in on the last day to hear what their daughters have learned.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Business Start-ups

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have registered in *(a)* Huddersfield, *(b)* Yorkshire and *(c)* England in each of the last five years. [16293]

Alun Michael: DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Huddersfield parliamentary constituency, Yorkshire[1] and England are shown as follows for 2000 to 2004. Data for 2005 will be available in autumn 2006.

VAT registrations 2000–04

	Huddersfield	*Yorkshire*[1]	*England*
2000	215	11,320	157,615
2001	195	10,985	148,835
2002	230	11,610	155,175
2003	240	12,880	166,505
2004	275	12,150	158,535

[1] The Government office region of Yorkshire and the Humber excluding North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire unitary authorities.

Source:

Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2004, Small Business Service, available at http://www.sbs.gov.uk/vats

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Only 1.8 million out of 4.3 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2004.

Commission for Racial Equality

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the maximum length of time is which it should take for a caseworker to be assigned by the Commission for Racial Equality when a complaint of a potentially discriminatory pay system is raised with them. [15511]

Paul Goggins: I have been asked to reply.

The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) does not have a target for the time it should take to assign a caseworker when a complaint of a potentially discriminatory pay system is raised with it. It prioritises cases on the basis of its own assessment of their urgency and then deals with them as quickly as the available resources will allow. The CRE has recently completed a consultation exercise on proposals aimed at improving the service it provides to the public.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many complaints regarding the time it takes to assign a caseworker by the Commission for Racial Equality there have been in each of the past five years. [15512]

Paul Goggins: I have been asked to reply.

This information is not available. The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) does not maintain a record of the number of complaints received about the time it takes to assign a caseworker. Where the complaint is covered by the Race Relations Act 1976, the CRE is bound by law to consider all applications for assistance in cases of alleged discrimination.

Although the amount of assistance given varies depending on the nature of the case, everyone who applies will get some advice.

eContentplus Programme

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many projects have applied to operate in the UK as part of the eContentplus programme; in which projects the Government is participating; and if he will making a statement. [16840]

Alun Michael: The eContentplus programme has only just issued its first call for proposals, and so there are no figures available as yet. Information for the eContent programme, which preceded eContentplus, may be of interest. It shows that in the four years of the its operation the programme attracted 71 UK participants, representing 10.3 per cent. of the total. The Government, directly or through one of its agencies, was a participant in eight of the projects, including ePATENT (the Patent Office), EULIS (Her Majesty's Land Registry), EUROREGIOMAP (Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland), @RETE (British Tourist Authority), ELCA2 (Environment Agency), EUROROADS (Ordnance Survey), EEARTH (National Environment Research Council), and DIAS (Council for the Central Laboratory of the Research Councils).

New Businesses

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have registered in each London borough in each of the last five years. [16946]

Alun Michael: DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for each London borough are shown as follows for 2000 to 2004. Data for 2005 will be available in autumn 2006.

VAT registrations 2000–04

	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Barking and Dagenham	370	320	320	360	355
Barnet	2,045	1,760	1,700	1,635	1,610
Bexley	590	620	540	570	535
Brent	1,175	1,090	1,030	1,160	1,150
Bromley	955	965	950	985	995
Camden	2,215	1,870	1,900	2,035	1,995
City of London	1,460	1,085	1,045	1,090	1,120
Croydon	960	945	985	1,070	945
Ealing	1,195	1,150	1,185	1,315	1,295
Enfield	900	820	845	900	905
Greenwich	530	490	485	515	560
Hackney	1,155	1,015	1,030	1,075	975
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,015	995	940	965	1,065
Haringey	970	880	830	895	905
Harrow	945	915	920	1,045	1,205
Havering	650	640	620	620	600
Hillingdon	865	760	845	850	870
Hounslow	825	815	800	855	845
Islington	1,365	1,190	1,230	1,240	1,310
Kensington and Chelsea	1,225	940	1,095	1,160	1,175
Kingston upon Thames	625	600	595	575	630
Lambeth	845	1,000	875	900	1,025
Lewisham	605	605	595	600	625
Merton	770	690	640	720	700
Newham	575	530	545	650	635
Redbridge	860	795	770	850	815
Richmond upon Thames	955	890	995	1,010	985
Southwark	1,100	955	975	1,085	1,080
Sutton	505	505	490	540	535
Tower Hamlets	1,095	935	970	1,110	1,045
Waltham Forest	650	630	650	685	695
Wandsworth	1,195	1,115	1,115	1,235	1,350
Westminster	5,225	4,765	4,535	5,590	4,930

Source:

Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2004, Small Business Service, available at http://www.sbs.gov.uk/vats

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Only 1.8 million out of 4.3 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2004.

Regional Government

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what regional *(a)* bodies, *(b)* institutions, *(c)* taskforces, *(d)* panels, *(e)* offices and *(f)* organisations have been established since May 1997 which are the responsibility of his Department. [15196]

Alun Michael: DTI has responsibility for the following entities with a regional remit which have been established since May 1997:

Bodies:

Eight Regional Development Agencies viz

Advantage West Midlands

East Midlands Development Agency

East of England Development Agency

North West Development Agency

One North West

South West England Development Agency

South West of England Regional Development Agency

Yorkshire Forward

Task Forces:

The MG Rover Task Force

Offices:

The Employment Tribunals Service has opened an office in Watford

WarnTone System

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will grant a test licence for the WarnTone system to alert traffic to emergency vehicles. [16855]

Alun Michael: The matter raised is the responsibility of the Office of Communications (Ofcom). Ofcom is the independent regulator for the communications sector, deriving its main powers and duties directly from statute rather than by delegation from my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, and accountable to Parliament in its own right. Accordingly, my officials have asked the chief executive of Ofcom to respond directly to the hon. Member and to send me a copy of his response. Copies of the chief executive's letter will also be placed in the Libraries of the House.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Firearms

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps his Department is taking to reduce the number of young people carrying firearms. [16716]

Hazel Blears: Young people's attitudes to guns can only be changed by everyone—Government, local authorities, police and communities—working together.

We are supporting local communities in fighting against gun crime through our small grant programme, the Connected Fund. We are also supporting anti-gun crime campaigns such as "Don't Trigger" which was launched on 3 October.

We have tightened the law on controls on firearms including putting in place a five year minimum sentence for those convicted of possession of an illegal firearm. The Violent Crime Reduction Bill includes a proposal for a ban on the sale, manufacture and import of realistic looking imitation firearms and a new offence of using another person to hide or carry a dangerous weapon.

Identity Cards

Martin Salter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost of an identity card will be; and if he will make a statement. [18588]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It will be affordable to set a charge of £30 at current prices for a stand-alone ID card which is valid for 10 years. This will be affordable within current Home Office spending plans.

This figure has been arrived at following careful scrutiny of the costs of the ID cards scheme over the summer by the Home Office, in full consultation with Treasury and other Government Departments.

We are unable to release the precise costs for individual aspects of the scheme because this information is commercially sensitive and could affect the Department's ability to secure value for money from the market. However, independent analysis in a report from KPMG, a summary of which will be published shortly, has concluded that the costing methodology is robust and appropriate for this stage of development.

We are also developing plans to roll the scheme out faster using registration with the criminal records bureau as well as passport application to enrol people into the ID cards scheme. This would lead to faster issuing of the card and improved outcomes and budget savings for the criminal records bureau.

We remain confident that further significant savings to Government and the private sector will be identified as plans are developed. In particular, the Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality, East (Mr. McNulty) now chairs a cross-departmental ministerial committee to identify transformational benefits and efficiencies which the ID cards scheme can deliver to other Government Departments.

Our current best estimate of the average unit cost of the combined passport and ID card package is £93; around 70 per cent. of these costs would be incurred anyway because of the worldwide move to biometric passports. We expect that most people will still choose to get their ID card alongside their new biometric passport as this will be the most convenient way to participate in the scheme and will give people the full benefits of having the most secure travel documentation.

I am also publishing today a research report 'Identity Cards: an assessment of awareness and demand for the Identity Cards Scheme' which demonstrates strong public support for the scheme.

Impact Nominal Index

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress is being made in developing the Impact Nominal Index; and if he will make a statement. [16476]

Paul Goggins: Significant progress has been made in developing the Impact Nominal Index. The operational capability is expected to be delivered in December 2005.

Payroll Giving

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the promotion of recent changes to the Payroll Giving Grants programme. [17246]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1784W.

Proceeds of Crime

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much money seized as a result of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 was invested in *(a)* Southend and *(b)* Essex police in each year of its operation; and if he will make a statement. [16591]

Paul Goggins: Information is not available in the form requested. The police asset recovery incentivisation scheme came into operation in 2004–05. Under the scheme Essex police received £29,387 on the basis of its performance in that year. Incentive payments based on performance in 2005–06 will be made in 2006–07. In addition, in 2004–05 two Essex based community groups received around £20,000 from the Connected Fund for anti-gun crime and knife crime initiatives. The Connected Fund was funded from confiscated proceeds of crime.

Sex Abuse Claims

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the use of polygraph tests in historical sex abuse investigations. [16479]

Paul Goggins: Evidence relating to the credibility of a witness from a lie-detector has not been admitted in the courts. The main reason is that there have been concerns about the accuracy of such tests. This led the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure to conclude in 1981 that the machine's

"lack of certainty from an evidential point of view"

told against its introduction in this country.

However, since 2003 the probation service has been piloting the use of polygraph examination with convicted sex offenders. The purpose is to test compliance with license conditions, risk management plans and treatment. Information from the examination can be shared with the police and other agencies. To date over 200 offenders have volunteered to be tested. During the course of examination many offenders have disclosed further information which has been useful in confirming the risk assessment or revising the risk management plan. If information were to be divulged in a polygraph test that could help in the investigation of an unsolved crime, this would, of course, be passed to the police.

Substance Abuse

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment his Department has made of the level of *(a)* alcohol misuse and *(b)* abuse of illegal drugs in 2004–05. [16731]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office has not made any recent comparative analysis between drug and alcohol misuse.

However, the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for England and accompanying Interim Analysis set out a broad assessment of the scope and extent of harms caused by alcohol.

Visas

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions since 1 May 1997 visas have been granted to religious representatives; what mechanisms are in place for the co-ordination of information between countries in this matter; and if he will make a statement. [16074]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply.

Figures are not available for Minister of Religion visa applications prior to 1998. The number of visas issued under the entry clearance category 'Ministers of Religion' from 1998 on an annual basis is as follows:

	Received	*Issued*	*Refused*
1998	69	37	16
1999	50	33	11
2000	131	123	35
2001	345	343	65
2002	409	333	72
2003	936	502	410
2004	888	517	348
2005 (January to August)	500	271	210
Total	3,328	2,159	1,167

While every effort is made to ensure that statistics are correct, the complexity of UKvisas global business, including technical failures and inconsistencies in data means 100 per cent. accuracy cannot be guaranteed.

The total number of applications issued and refused may not always equal the total of applications received. This can be caused by a variety of reasons. Applications can be carried forward from one year to another before being resolved. They may be withdrawn during processing, but still count as an application received. In these circumstances, delays can and do occur between the application being received and the decision being taken.

There are no specific mechanisms to share data on visa applicants with foreign governments or law enforcement agencies in any particular category of the Immigration Rules. However, if the need to share data or information arises on individual applications, UKvisas will consider doing so if such action complies with the principles and terms of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Weapons

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he is taking to deal with *(a)* gun and *(b)* knife crime. [16717]

Hazel Blears: We are working with communities, other Government Departments, local authorities and law enforcement agencies to combat gun and knife crime.

We are supporting local initiatives through funding from recycled criminal assets. £2 million was allocated to support work related to gun crime for 2004–05 and a further £2 million for 2005–06. Some of this is being allocated to small community initiatives through our connected fund. To date, 119 projects have been supported in two rounds of the fund, with a third currently under way.

We are working with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and other agencies to improve intelligence-gathering, examine links between drugs and gun crime, reduce the supply and availability of firearms, develop effective police operations, and expand the use of the national firearms forensic intelligence database .

On knife crime, the Government support the work of the police for example through dedicated, intelligence-led operations, such as Operation Blunt in London, and we are developing proposals with the Association of Chief Police Officers for a nation-wide knife amnesty similar to some campaigns currently being run by the Metropolitan police.

The Department of Education and Skills introduced the Safer Schools Partnerships scheme in spring 2002. More than 400 police officers are now based in schools to reduce victimisation, criminality and antisocial behaviour.

We are introducing new measures on gun and knife crime in the Violent Crime Reduction Bill, currently before Parliament, which will raise the age for purchasing a knife to 18, ban the sale, manufacture and import of realistic imitation firearms, give head teachers powers to search pupils for weapons, and introduce a new offence of using another person to hide or carry a gun or knife.

PRIME MINISTER

Advisers

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the occasions in 2004–05, when an unpaid adviser undertook travel on public business and claimed expenses, broken down by *(a)* name of adviser, *(b)* dates and destinations of travel and *(c)* cost to public funds. [17282]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my noble Friend the Lord Bassam of Brighton on 2 February 2005, *Official Report*, House of Lords, column WA54.

Ministerial Travel

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the occasions since 1 January 2004 when Ministers wishing to be absent from the UK have sought his written approval; and whether his approval was given in each case. [17280]

The Prime Minister: Correspondence between Ministers relates to internal discussion and advice and is therefore not disclosed.

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister on how many occasions a Minister's spouse or partner accompanied a Minister on *(a)* domestic and *(b)* overseas official duties during 2004–05, broken down by (i) name of Minister, (ii) dates of travel and (iii) cost to public funds. [17281]

The Prime Minister: The information requested is not held centrally. The cost of spouses or partners accompanying Ministers on overseas visits is included in the overall cost of Ministers' visits overseas, which is published on an annual basis. Copies are available in the Library of the House.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Oliver Cromwell

Mike Penning: To ask the Leader of the House if his Department will commemorate the 350th anniversary of the death of Oliver Cromwell. [17082]

Mr. Hoon: I have no plans to do so.

WALES

EU Funding

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent discussions he has had with *(a)* the Prime Minister and *(b)* the Foreign Secretary on securing EU funding for (i) Wales and (ii) West Wales and the Valleys; what assessment he has made of the likelihood of securing budgetary agreement on EU funding for Wales before Christmas; and if he will make a statement. [17011]

Mr. Hain: I have regular discussions with Cabinet colleagues on a range of issues of importance to Wales, including the current negotiations on the EU structural funds programme from 2007 to 2013.

I am acutely aware of the importance of timing if Wales is to continue to benefit from the higher level of European aid. Negotiations on the EU Structural and Cohesion Fund are closely linked to the wider discussions on the financial perspective for the EU for the same period. The UK presidency is taking forward the discussions on future financing and is committed to preparing the future financing dossier for the December council.

DEFENCE

Departmental Spending

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total spending by his Department on *(a)* staff, *(b)* accommodation and *(c)* procurement in (i) Moray constituency and (ii) the Highland Region was for the most recent year for which figures are available. [14855]

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total spending by his Department on *(a)* staff, *(b)* accommodation and *(c)* procurement in

(i) Dundee East constituency, (ii) Tayside and (iii) the City of Dundee was for the most recent year for which figures are available. [14879]

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total spending by his Department on *(a)* staff, *(b)* accommodation and *(c)* procurement in (i) Banff and Buchan and (ii) the North East of Scotland was for the most recent year for which figures are available. [14889]

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total spending by his Department on *(a)* staff, *(b)* accommodation and *(c)* procurement in Perth and North Perthshire was for the most recent year for which figures are available. [14913]

Mr. Touhig: The information is not held in the format requested and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Drill Hall, Seaford

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on his plans for the Drill Hall, Broad Street, Seaford. [17322]

Mr. Touhig: The Drill Hall is currently used by No 2 Seaford Platoon, Sussex Army Cadet Force. Options for the future of this building are being reviewed. No decisions have been taken.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Annajoy David Da-Bora

Mr. MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he will take to assure the safety of Annajoy David Da-Bora and her daughter, when they travel to Spain on 27 July following court decisions in Spain and London. [15046]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Our consular staff cannot guarantee the safety and/or personal security of British nationals abroad. If Mrs. Da-Bora has concerns for her personal safety, she should make them known to the Spanish police who are the responsible authority for the protection of individuals in Spain. Our staff are ready to provide appropriate consular assistance to Mrs. Da-Bora and to accompany her if she wishes to call on the Spanish police.

Departmental Websites

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the websites that come under his Department's responsibility; what the cost was of each in the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to each site in that year. [15904]

Ian Pearson: Websites, which come under the responsibility of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), fall into two categories; those, which are hosted on the FCO web platform, and those developed and hosted independently either by the post or the Department.

The running cost of the FCO web platform (not including staff costs), encompassing all platform websites for financial year 2004–05 was £588,000. Development costs for the web platform, including the design and build of the EU presidency, G8 presidency, Arabic and freedom of information sites, was £750,000. Across the platform as a whole the average monthly page impressions during 2004 were 7,604,166. Average monthly visits are estimated to be 2,534,722. Details of all websites hosted on the FCO Web Platform have been deposited in the Library of the House.

Platform websites: the number of page views are given for those sites where data is available for 2004. In some cases average page views for 2005 have been given to give an indication of traffic volumes.

Website	*URL*	*Page views*
Foreign and Commonwealth Office-website	www.fco.gov.uk	38,406,487
Freedom of information-website	www.fco.gov.uk/foi	Not launched until 2005 (68,426 average per month)
G8 Gleneagles 2005-website	www.g8.gov.uk	Not launched until 2005 (2,261, 116 January-September)
FCO Arabic website	www.fco.gov.uk/arabic	Not launched until 2005 (34,343 average per month)
UKvisas website	www.ukvisas.gov.uk	15,403,519
UK EU presidency 2005	www.eu2005.gov.uk	Not launched until 2005
UK EU presidency 2005-French language site	www.ue2005.gov.uk	Not launched until 2005
i-uk.com	www.i-uk.com	2,424,790

Independent websites

Website	*URL*	*Cost (£) p.a.*	*Visitors*
Australia: British Information Services Canberra	www.britaus.net	[redacted]	[redacted]
China: British Embassy Beijing	www.britishembassy.org.cn	10,008	433,338
DesignUK 04	http://www.designuk.jp/	2,000	12,647
Germany: British Embassy Berlin	www.britischebotschaft.de	955	419,084
Ireland: British Embassy Dublin	www.britishembassy.ie	700	301,095
Israel: British Embassy Tel Aviv	www.britemb.org.il	210	80,000
Japan: British Embassy Tokyo and UKNOW portal	http://www.uknow.or.jp/	32,000	632,930
my-earth.org.uk	http://www.my-earth.org.uk/top_flash_J.html	34,000	1,000,000

Independent websites

Website	*URL*	*Cost (£) p.a.*	*Visitors*
Seychelles	www.bhcvictoria.sc/	[1]—	[1]—
Spain: British Embassy Madrid	www.ukinspain.com	[1]—	[1]—
Sweden: British Embassy, Stockholm	www.britishembassy.se	80.20	96,464
Uganda: British High Commission Kampala	www.britain.or.ug	[1]—	[1]—
United States of America: British Information Services New York UK Mission to the UN, New York	www.britainusa.com	9,000	2,316,117
UK Permanent Representation to the EU	www.ukun.org www.ukrep.be	[1]—	[2]14,533,890 [1]—
Go Gap Year Website (launched March 2005)	www.gogapyear.com	43,000	[3]1,759

[1] Data not available.
[2] Pageviews.
[3] Average hits per day.

European Constitution

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the EU Trade Commissioner regarding the promotion of the EU Constitution. [15747]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: None.

Guantanamo Bay

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the treatment of British citizens held in Camp Delta, Guantanamo Bay. [15822]

Ian Pearson: There are no British Citizens held at Guantanamo Bay.

Nuclear-capable Countries

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list countries assessed to be nuclear capable according to open source material; and if he will make a statement. [16703]

Dr. Howells: For the purposes of this answer 'nuclear capable' is taken to refer to countries capable of producing fissile material for nuclear weapons, other than the five nuclear weapons states recognised by the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT) and the other states which have carried out nuclear test explosions (India and Pakistan).

To produce fissile material, a state must master enrichment or reprocessing technology. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has listed the following non-nuclear weapons states (NNWS) as having enrichment plants, including pilot plants: Argentina, Brazil, Germany, Iran, Japan, and the Netherlands. It has also listed the following NNWS as possessing chemical reprocessing plants, including pilot plants: the DRPK, Germany, Italy and Japan. Israel is also widely assumed to possess reprocessing facilities.

Possession of enrichment or reprocessing facilities does not imply an intention to produce fissile material for nuclear weapons. But nor does the lack of such facilities mean that a country could not acquire them in the future. A number of other states would be capable of constructing enrichment or reprocessing facilities if they chose to do so.

This is why the NPT remains such an important instrument. It enshrines the principle that, with the exception of the nuclear weapon states, who are bound by the disarmament principles of Article VI, States Party to the Treaty will not manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons and will allow any nuclear material that they do possess to be subject to IAEA safeguards.

The hon. Member may find further information on IAEA assessments at http://www.iaea.org/OurWork/SV/Safeguards/sv.html.

Subsidiarity

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his policy on the transfer of powers from the EU to national Governments; and which powers he has identified as best run at national level. [16088]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Any changes in the division of competences between the EU and member states would require negotiation and agreement of a new Treaty by all 25 member states. The Government's focus during the UK presidency of the EU is on taking forward a wider debate about the future direction of the EU, rather then looking once again at its institutional architecture.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Olympic Games

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has made to the football associations of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland on the formation of a British football team for the 2012 London Olympics; and if she will make a statement. [16912]

Mr. Caborn: Ultimately, this is a matter for FIFA, the four home nations' football associations, and the organisers of the Olympic tournament. However, the Secretary of State has discussed the issue of a Great British football team for the Olympics with the Football Association of England on a number of occasions.

The Government believe that a GB Olympic football team at a 2012 London Olympics could be very exciting for football fans and discussions between the various parties continue. The Government also believe this

should not affect the rights of the four home nations to compete separately in international football tournaments—an important part of our footballing tradition.

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the outcome of the independent investigation into potential conflicts of interest at the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment; what changes have been implemented following the investigations; and if she will make a statement. [16939]

Mr. Lammy: When the report by AHL Ltd. on "Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, audit of conflicts of interest" was published in June 2004 (HC 678), the Department and the Commission (CABE) announced that we had accepted all of the report's 28 recommendations. These have all been implemented as set out in the following table:

Recommendation	*Action/current state*
Recommendations relating to Nolan principles	
1. Where potential for conflicts of interest exists the DCMS should formally document the assessment of any risks arising including whether this impacts on the suitability of a candidate for the proposed public position. The risk assessment should be re-performed at the time of re-appointment to ensure any change in circumstances is understood. The risk assessments should be retained as part of the appointment process. Actions required on the part of CABE to manage potential conflicts of interest should be agreed between the DCMS and CABE at the time of appointment. (15.3)	Done—Implemented for the last appointments of CABE Heritage commissioner and chairman. DCMS NDPB chairs informed of new conflict of interest procedures on re-appointment in DCMS letter of 20 August 2004.
2. The profile of the future chair of CABE should be re-defined to minimise the risks associated with any public perception of conflict of interest arising. It is not in the public interest for the post to be held by a person with material commercial interests that may come into conflict with CABE's remit (16.9)	Done—Detailed role specification prepared as part of recruitment of chairman.
3. Given the growth both in CABE and Stanhope, we have concluded that the position of chair of CABE should, in the future, not be held by a property developer, with significant commercial interests. (16.10)	Done—Role specification included the criterion "demonstrate an understanding of CABE's remit and a sensitivity to the interplay between that remit and wider commercial interests".
4. DCMS should review the balance of the commissioners active in the industry and those from an independent but relevant background. (17.5)	Done—recruitment for new commissioners in 2006 to start shortly.
5. A risk assessment should be formally undertaken as part of the appointment of the chair of Design Review. Such an assessment should be undertaken for the existing post and any future appointments. Consideration should be given to extending this approach to the appointment of chair of all of the commission's sub-committees. (20.19)	Done as part of appointment of Les Sparks in September 2004. Concept of Nominations Panel accepted and risk assessment to be rolled out to each sub-committee chair.
6. Interests must in the future be declared to CABE at the time of intent rather than commitment, as this is when the potential for conflict arises. (18.9)	Done—intentions declared on CABE's log of intentions.
7. The direct commercial relationships between the commissioners, or the chair, should continue to be monitored and recorded in the register of interests. (18.14)	Done—register of interests pro forma has been amended to include commissioners' commercial relationships.
8. The Audit Committee should review the risks of declared interests to CABE. This should be repeated twice a year to ensure risks are reassessed against any changes in the profile of an existing interest The findings of this review should be reported to the commission and also to the DCMS. (18.11)	This is now done twice a year. The Audit Committee assesses the register of interests in March and September. The assessment is reported to commissioners and DCMS.
9. A copy of the register of interests should be formally circulated to commissioners once a year to ensure the extent and depth of interests is understood (18.12)	Done 27 October 04. Due to be done again in October 2005.
10. The appointments process for Design Review panel members must be seen to be an open, as well as fair process. Implementation of the recommendations made by CABE on how this should be achieved is endorsed. (20.11)	Done. The competition process was agreed by CABE's Operations Committee on 2 September 2004. Appointments announced January 2005. The process will be repeated annually.
11. In line with standard governance practice, training on an annual basis for Commissioners should be provided. (17.6)	Done—The first training event was held on 16 March 2005. The next event will be in March 2006.
12. Commissioners should sign a statement on appointment confirming their acceptance and understanding of the Nolan principles and their attendance on the induction training programme. (17.7)	Done—introduced for new commissioner appointments from November 2004.
13. CABE should further consider the need to make the register of interests more publicly available, for example by including it on the website. (18.13)	Done—notice put on CABE's website (http://www.cabe.org.uk/about/commissioners.asp) stating that the register is available for inspection or a copy will be provided (in either electronic or paper form).
Recommendations to improve procedures in managing conflicts of interest	
14. The commissioners' register of interests forms should be revised to include requirements to outline where an interest may amount to a potential or perceived conflict to CABE; record interests of connected parties on the register so that relevant familial or company interests are also reported. (18.10)	Done—CABE's register pro forma amended to explicitly capture this information. Conflicts of interest guidance revised and expanded. Requirement to register perceived or potential conflicts included in guidance.
15. If professional advisors are used which also represent public sector board members in a private capacity, different partners should be involved, and the interest declared (19.3)	Done: *(a)* DCMS issued new guidance to all its executive NDPBs on 24 March 2004. *(b)* CABE: different legal advisers have been retained to ensure separation on this issue.

Recommendation	*Action/current state*
16. The general principles adopted to determine at which level of Design Review a scheme should be reviewed, should be documented. (20.4)	Done—Principles considered and agreed by Operations Committee on 2 September 2004.
17. The induction process for Design Review panel (DRP) members should be extended by:	Done—Considered and agreed by Operations Committee on 2 September 2004. Implemented for new DRP members starting in January 2005. Each new DRP member will have a 1:1 induction meeting with the Director of Design Review.
Providing further formal guidance on managing conflicts of interest; Documenting the induction process to ensure the importance of meeting public sector standards is covered, including Nolan principles and conflicts of interest. (20.15)	
18. The person specification for 'chair of Design Review' should be included in the terms of reference for the Design Review Committee. (20.20)	Done—Considered and agreed by Operations Committee on 2 September 2004.
19. A register should be maintained of Design Review panel members' current employment. This should be circulated to all commissioners and Design Review members (20.25)	Done—last circulated to commissioners in October 2004, and due to be circulated again in October 2005.
20. CABE's internal auditors should provide the Audit Committee with an annual assurance on the management of Design Review, in respect of propriety and regularity, including conflict of interest (20.27)	CABE's internal auditors are due to provide an annual review of Design Review from 2005–06.
21. CABE should include in the form completed by those presenting to Design Review the fact that the opinion given will be in the public domain unless the developer requests that it be kept confidential. In instances where it is requested that an opinion remain confidential, the developer should also be required to maintain confidentiality and advise CABE when the scheme is to enter the public domain. (20.30)	Done—CABE's procedures on confidential advice were agreed at a commission meeting on 15 September 2004 and formalized in a procedure note agreed by the Operations Committee on 16 February 2005.
22. Where relevant, the final opinion letter should reflect the fact that the scheme has been reviewed by CABE over a period of time. (20.34)	Done—this is now done explicitly in all cases.
23. The Conflicts of Interests Guidance Note should be revised to reflect recommendations arising from this review. (21.7)	Done—Revised conflicts of interest guidance and new conflicts of interest policy agreed by Operations Committee on 16 February 2005.
24. The process for declaring new interests that are made during the year should be formalised and care taken that paper and electronic copies of the register match each other. (21.8)	Done—A form for notifying changes has been produced by CABE. CABE's head of corporate governance now formally monitors amendments.
25. The risks to CABE arising from interests declared by staff should be assessed, documented and reported to the Audit Committee. (21.9)	Done—CABE staff register of interests and risk assessment considered by Audit Committee 8 December 2004. Next review due November 2005.
26. The internal audit strategy should include annual internal audit reviews of Conflict of Interest Management. (21.10)	Done—first annual internal audit conducted in March 2005.
27. A risk mitigation plan should be put in place for managing the risk of conflicts of interest. (21.11)	Done—CABE Audit Committee reviews risk register every six months; conflicts of interest are a top priority.
28. CABE should develop a handling strategy for conflicts of interest. (21.12)	Done—handling strategy agreed by Audit Committee on 16 March 2005.

This updates the table (CAB33*(a)*) published in the ODPM Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions Committee's report, "The Role and Effectiveness of CABE", Fifth Report of Session 2004–05, HC 59, March 2005.

Royal Charter for UK Sport

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what guidance she has issued on whether the grant of a Royal Charter for UK Sport affects the ability of its staff to engage in party political activities or activities that could reasonably be construed as party political; and if she will make a statement. [17368]

Mr. Caborn: UK Sport's management statement and its associated financial memorandum require UK Sport to have a code of conduct for staff and to comply with the Cabinet Office's guidance on non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs). This states that NDPBs' rules of conduct should cover political activity.

The UK Sport staff handbook indicates that rules on staff participation in political activities are regulated by the guidelines and principles contained in the civil service management code. The Cabinet Office also produced guidance for civil servants prior to the general election 2005, which UK Sport circulated to all staff.

Welsh Legislation

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how she intends to implement paragraph 3.12 of the White Paper, "Better Governance for Wales" (Cm 6582), in respect of any Bill she introduces in the current Session of Parliament. [14949]

Mr. Lammy: I intend to implement the Government's policy as stated in paragraph 3.12 of the White Paper "Better Governance for Wales" Cm 6582. My Department is in discussion with the Assembly Government on the issue concerned.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

"Playing with Sounds" Programme

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps the Government are taking to encourage and promote the use of synthetic phonics teaching for primary school children; and if she will make a statement. [16539]

Jacqui Smith: Every child has an entitlement to structured phonics teaching as part of the literacy curriculum. The Primary National Strategy (PNS) promotes an approach to phonics that is fundamentally synthetic, and has provided materials and training to support teachers and early years practitioners in delivering this. Schools are free to select the phonics programme that best suits their needs. However, we expect that the selected programme would at least match the quality, standards and expectations in PNS materials.

Jim Rose, a former senior Ofsted inspector with significant expertise in primary education, is currently carrying out an independent review of best practice in the teaching of early reading, including the place of phonics. His findings, expected in early 2006, will further inform PNS approaches. The Department has also instigated Early Reading Development Pilots aimed at examining how children's learning outcomes can be enhanced through a systematic and fast paced approach to the teaching of phonics, and to identify effective models of support to schools and ways of enhancing parental involvement. These pilots begin in 200 schools and early years settings this autumn and use a programme of phonics based on the PNS "Playing with Sounds" materials. Findings will complement Jim Rose's work, with early findings informing his review, and will feed into a review of the PNS framework for teaching literacy and the Early Development and Learning Framework.

Adult Education

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if she will make a statement on the availability of adult education classes in England; [17745]

(2) how much the Government spent on adult education in each of the last five years for which figures are available; [17746]

(3) what plans she has to increase the availability of adult education; and if she will make a statement. [17747]

Phil Hope: The Department allocates funds for education and training in the post-16 learning and skills sector to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). We ensure adult learning provision is provided through the funding from the LSC to further education colleges, local authorities and other providers. The LSC was established in 2001 bringing the planning and funding of post-16 education together under one body. Local LSC's agree delivery plans with local providers, ensuring that the local needs of individuals and employers are met.

In 2005/06 we have emphasised our priorities for further education which guarantee a place in education or training for all young people and a focus on support for adults without a solid foundation of employability skills. In 2005/06 total funding for FE will increase by 4.4 per cent. compared to 2004/05. Funding for non-vocational learning opportunities for adults, through the adult and community learning budget has also increased. In 2004/05 nationally we provided over £207 million to the Learning and Skills Council in support of this learning. This has risen to £210 million in 2005/06.

In 2001–02 the Learning and Skills Council spent £2,236 million on adult programmes including FE, work based learning, adult and community learning and other programmes. This increased to £2,427 million in 2002–03 and to £2,866 million in 2003–04. Figures for adult education for the years prior to 2001 are not comparable as the budget was split between a range of different organisations. The departmental annual report sets out total expenditure on further education, adult training and skills and lifelong learning for this period.

Children (Bereavement)

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what statistics the Government *(a)* collect and *(b)* are planning to collect on children affected by bereavement. [16572]

Maria Eagle: The Government do not collect statistics relating to children affected by bereavement and currently have no plans to do so. Research-based estimates suggest that around 14,600 children suffer bereavement each year (in England and Wales)[1] and that children have a 6 per cent. chance of suffering parental bereavement by the age of 16[2].

This issue and the closely-related issue of research into the impact of child bereavement was considered at some length by the former Minister of State for Children, Young People and Families (The right hon. Member for Barking (Margaret Hodge)). It was concluded that a considerable body of research in this area was already being developed, and that it would not be appropriate to decide on any new data collection until current work being undertaken by researchers had been completed.

[1] Lowton & Higginson (2002) "Early bereavement: what factors influence children's responses to death?" London: Kings College London, University of London

[2] Harrison & Harrington (2001) cited in Childhood Bereavement Network Briefing Paper: Children and Bereavement

Construction Workers (London)

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the number of skilled construction workers in London, broken down by *(a)* constituency and *(b)* age. [12019]

Phil Hope: The numbers of construction workers in London, and those who hold qualifications at level 2 or higher, are as follows:

Construction workers (London)

Learning skills council area	*Number of construction workers*	*Number holding level 2 or higher qualification*	*Percentage*
Central London	17,000	8,000	47
East London	38,000	21,000	55
North London	14,000	6,000	48
South London	21,000	12,000	59
West London	22,000	11,000	50
Total	111,000	59,000	53

Age band	Number of construction workers	Number holding level 2 or higher qualification	Percentage
16 to 19	4,000	1,000	30
20 to 24	9,000	4,000	42
25 to 29	14,000	7,000	48
30 to 39	28,000	17,000	59
40 to 49	28,000	16,000	58
50 to 59	22,000	12,000	54
60 plus	6,000	2,000	37
Total	111,000	59,000	53

Note:
Estimates of less than 10,000 are based on very small sample sizes and are subject to a higher degree of sampling variability. They should therefore be treated with caution.
Source:
Annual Local Area Labour Force Survey (ALALFS) in 2003/04

Estimates are given by Learning Skills Council Area rather than by constituency because sample sizes are not large enough to give reliable estimates at constituency level.

Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) are being established to identify and define the skills that employers need to raise productivity in all major sectors of the economy. Construction is one of four sectors pioneering new Sector Skills Agreements to deliver on this agenda.

Construction was highlighted as a priority curriculum area in "Success for All: Our Vision for the Future" the Government's strategy for reforming further education and training published in November 2002.

Correspondence

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when the Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education will reply to the letter dated 21 July regarding funding provisions for further education from the hon. Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme. [17520]

Bill Rammell: I have today responded to the hon. Member's letter of 21 July.

Freedom of Information

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Freedom of Information Act 2000 requests have been answered by the Department; and in how many cases *(a)* information was wholly exempted, *(b)* information was partly exempted and *(c)* the requests were answered in full. [14953]

Jacqui Smith: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2248W, by my right hon. Friend the Minister for the Department for Constitutional Affairs.

Science Teaching

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if she will make a statement on the future of the Double Award Science GCSE; [17432]

(2) if she will make a statement on the planned changes to the Key Stage 4 Science Curriculum from 2006; [17433]

(3) what consultation was carried out with respect to the introduction of the new programme of study for science GCSEs from 2006; [17434]

(4) how many students her Department estimates will be taught courses leading to *(a)* GCSE Science, *(b)* GCSE Additional Science, *(c)* GCSE Additional Applied Science, *(d)* GCSE Biology, *(e)* GCSE Chemistry and *(f)* GCSE Physics under the new programmes of study to be made available in 2006–07. [17435]

Bill Rammell: The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the National Foundation for Educational Research carried out widespread consultation on proposals to introduce a revised programme of study at Key Stage 4. The science and science education communities and a sample of schools, colleges and universities were included in the consultation. The majority of respondents supported the changes.

The new programme of study for science at Key Stage 4 will maintain the breadth, depth and challenge of the current curriculum, while catering for a wide range of students' interests and aptitudes and encouraging more students to study more science.

The current Double Award Science GCSE will not be available after summer 2008. Awarding bodies will be offering a range of options, with Science and Additional Science being the closest equivalent to it.

The Government does not make forward projections of take up for individual examinations. However, we expect that at least 80 per cent. of students should do at least two science GCSEs and propose to give young people an entitlement to study leading to at least two science GCSEs.

Sector Skills Councils

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research her Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the (i) role and (ii) effectiveness of sector skills councils; and if she will make a statement. [15501]

Phil Hope: Working with the Sector Skills Councils (SSCs), Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and Devolved Administrations, the Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) has established a performance monitoring and evaluation framework. This has set out a series of performance measures and indicators related to their policy objectives (set down within the Skills for Business performance scorecard).

Using this framework, an annual programme of evaluation work was developed. The evaluation programme consists of four core projects;

Survey of employers—this has consulted a nationally representative sample of 13,500 employers across the United Kingdom.

Survey of stakeholders, including officials of Government Departments, educationalists and representatives of Government agencies such as the Learning and Skills Council, Regional Development Agencies, Scottish Further Education Funding Council, Education and Learning Wales.

Qualitative work, with selected SSCs and the SSDA and a range of stakeholders.

Summary and Overview project analysing the full range of evaluation information and pulling it together into one overall assessment, which constitutes the overview report.

Key findings from the first and second phase of evaluation are available on the SSDA website (http://www.ssda.org.uk/ssda/default.aspx?page=41)

Skills Shortages

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent assessment her Department has made of where the UK has skills shortages; and what steps it has taken to rectify such shortages. [16557]

Phil Hope: The Learning and Skills Council in England conducts a National Employers Skills Survey to identify skill shortages and skill gaps to inform their planning and public funding of post 16 education and training. The Government has also established the Skills for Business Network and Regional Skills Partnerships. Skills for Business comprises the Sector Skills Development Agency and 24 licensed Sector Skills Councils to provide employer-led strategic action to meet each sector's skills and business needs. Each SSC is tasked with producing a wide-ranging Sector Skills Agreement beginning with an assessment of the sector's long-term, medium and short-term needs and progressing to a final agreement with key partners and agencies signed up to secure the necessary skills supply. Regional Skills Partnerships bring together the planning and funding agencies within a region to address identified priorities. Although separate training arrangements apply in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, all three devolved administrations will work to implement Sector Skills Agreements.

Special Needs (London)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding has been allocated to special needs provision in each London borough in each of the last eight years. [16947]

Maria Eagle: The information requested is only available from 2000–01 onwards and is contained within the following table:

Budgeted net expenditure on the education of children with special educational needs[1, 2]

£

Local authority name	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
City of London	202,000	242,000	336,000	401,000	432,000	398,000
Barking and Dagenham	9,383,000	6,293,000	11,935,000	12,812,000	15,361,000	17,273,000
Barnet	26,197,000	26,090,000	26,784,000	31,236,000	33,519,000	35,919,000
Bexley	14,451,000	16,754,000	17,731,000	21,465,000	21,511,000	23,460,000
Brent	15,181,000	16,626,000	17,099,000	18,891,000	23,316,000	25,070,000
Bromley	16,356,000	16,987,000	16,549,000	23,357,000	22,286,000	27,542,000
Camden	9,490,000	14,215,000	13,056,000	15,388,000	16,790,000	19,673,000
Croydon	20,241,000	22,008,000	21,252,000	24,969,000	25,453,000	29,434,000
Ealing	19,895,000	20,347,000	22,588,000	23,075,000	24,729,000	25,931,000
Enfield	19,814,000	20,172,000	19,667,000	23,536,000	26,770,000	27,851,000
Greenwich	20,336,000	19,883,000	21,328,000	23,425,000	26,412,000	27,615,000
Hackney	17,296,000	18,172,000	18,690,000	20,443,000	23,688,000	35,951,000
Hammersmith and Fulham	8,256,000	8,045,000	9,280,000	10,297,000	12,558,000	13,901,000
Haringey	14,782,000	16,974,000	20,411,000	21,628,000	26,314,000	27,455,000
Harrow	14,763,000	13,181,000	12,030,000	14,794,000	18,630,000	20,632,000
Havering	9,333,000	9,595,000	9,607,000	10,842,000	11,452,000	12,489,000
Hillingdon	15,789,000	18,143,000	19,137,000	21,263,000	23,350,000	23,908,000
Hounslow	14,772,000	16,092,000	16,395,000	20,330,000	21,412,000	23,867,000
Islington	11,796,000	10,973,000	12,466,000	15,930,000	18,090,000	19,091,000
Kensington and Chelsea	7,636,000	7,123,000	5,460,000	6,869,000	7,434,000	8,093,000
Kingston upon Thames	7,764,000	9,025,000	10,363,000	10,671,000	12,073,000	13,095,000
Lambeth	20,672,000	21,775,000	20,900,000	23,896,000	26,150,000	27,537,000
Lewisham	15,996,000	17,092,000	17,190,000	27,098,000	27,139,000	27,051,000
Merton	11,422,000	12,169,000	12,696,000	13,467,000	14,001,000	16,888,000
Newham	19,623,000	21,807,000	24,554,000	28,901,000	31,592,000	37,180,000
Redbridge	12,670,000	13,658,000	14,655,000	16,587,000	19,880,000	20,907,000
Richmond upon Thames	6,228,000	8,651,000	7,935,000	10,085,000	11,679,000	12,170,000
Southwark	20,278,000	21,253,000	20,208,000	23,129,000	26,440,000	28,224,000
Sutton	11,443,000	12,880,000	15,259,000	16,863,000	18,707,000	20,432,000
Tower Hamlets	24,829,000	24,946,000	22,926,000	27,202,000	29,593,000	33,297,000
Waltham Forest	14,395,000	15,119,000	18,181,000	17,295,000	19,097,000	22,321,000
Wandsworth	17,511,000	18,312,000	18,815,000	19,980,000	25,704,000	27,833,000
Westminster	8,314,000	8,814,000	9,760,000	11,901,000	12,750,000	17,506,000

[1] Includes planned expenditure on the provision for pupils with statements and the provision for non-statemented pupils with SEN, support for inclusion, inter authority recoupment, fees for pupils at independent special schools and abroad, educational psychology service, local authority functions in relation to child protection, therapies and other health related services, parent partnership, guidance and information, the monitoring of SEN provision and inclusion administration, assessment and co-ordination. Also included is the funding delegated to primary and secondary schools identified as "notional SEN" and the individual schools budget (ISB) for special schools.

[2] The ISB for special schools will include some general education costs for pupils with SEN in addition to those costs specifically for SEN while the figures recorded against "notional SEN" are only indicative of the amount that might be spent by schools on SEN and, from 2004–05 onwards, "notional SEN" delegated to nursery schools was reported on Section 52 for the first time and this accounts for £2.7million and £3.3million of the 2004–05 and 2005–06 London totals respectively. In 2005–06, local authorities in London also budgeted £90million for SEN transport expenditure but this is not included in the above table as figures are not available prior to 2005–06.

Notes:
1. Figures are as reported by the LEA in cash terms as at 10 October 2005 and are rounded to the nearest thousand pounds and may not sum due to rounding.
2. 2005–06 data is provisional and is subject to change by the local authority.

Sure Start

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding has been allocated to Sure Start for *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* future financial years; and if she will make a statement. [17012]

Beverley Hughes: Funding allocated to Sure Start for 2005–06 was £1,140,000,000. Funding allocated to Sure Start is £1,696,000,000 for 2006–07 and £1,809,000,000 for 2007–08. Funding for 2008–09 and beyond is an issue for the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review.

This funding represents a significant investment in support of the 10-Year Strategy and the Government's vision to ensure that every child gets the best start in life and to give parents more choice about how to balance work and family life. The increase in funding is substantial, showing a 59 per cent. increase in 2007–08 compared to 2005–06.

HEALTH

Abortions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many abortions were performed in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Bedford and Hertfordshire Strategic Health Authority on girls aged (i) 10, (ii) 11, (iii) 12, (iv) 13, (v) 14, (vi) 15, (vii) 16 and (viii) 17 years of age in each year since 1975; and how many were performed to save the life of the pregnant woman. [15468]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is shown in the table.

Legal abortions: total number of abortions, number of abortions performed to save the life of the pregnant woman[a] for residents of England and Wales, and number of abortions by age under 20[b], to residents of Essex[c] and Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire[d] 1975–2004

	England and Wales	
	Total	Sections 1(1)(c) and 1(4)
1975	106,224	1,076
1976	101,912	959
1977	102,677	851
1978	111,851	691
1979	120,611	605
1980	128,927	687
1981	128,581	766
1982	128,553	666
1983	127,375	543
1984	136,388	599
1985	141,101	539
1986	147,619	486
1987	156,191	482
1988	168,298	490
1989	170,463	356
1990	173,900	440
1991	167,376	380
1992	160,501	256
1993	157,846	166
1994	156,539	147
1995	154,315	126
1996	167,916	131
1997	170,145	121
1998	177,871	108
1999	173,701	95
2000	175,542	137
2001	176,364	61
2002	175,932	(0.5%) 117
2003	181,582	(0.6%) 137
2004	185,415	128

Legal abortions: total number of abortions, number of abortions performed to save the life of the pregnant woman[a] for residents of England and Wales, and number of abortions by age under 20[b], to residents of Essex[c] and Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire[d] 1975–2004

	Essex[c]					
	Total	<15	<16	16	17	16–19
1975	[1]2,807	[e]	124	[e]	[e]	616
1976	2,666	[e]	113	[e]	[e]	611
1977	2,763	[e]	118	[e]	[e]	627
1978	2,954	[e]	118	[e]	[e]	676
1979	3,230	[e]	85	[e]	[e]	783
1980	3,366	[e]	102	[e]	[e]	818
1981	[2]n/a	[e]	n/a	[e]	[e]	n/a
1982	n/a	[e]	n/a	[e]	[e]	n/a
1983	[3]1,805	[e]	66	[e]	[e]	444
1984	1,997	[e]	77	[e]	[e]	77
1985	2,074	[e]	67	[e]	[e]	67
1986	1,879	[e]	51	[e]	[e]	51
1987	2,003	[e]	56	[e]	[e]	507
1988	2,462	[e]	53	[e]	[e]	628
1989	2,524	[e]	50	[e]	[e]	630
1990	2,447	[e]	53	[e]	[e]	568
1991	2,532	[e]	45	[e]	[e]	501
1992	2,386	[e]	47	[e]	[e]	461
1993	[4]4,260	[e]	85	[e]	[e]	746
1994	4,031	18	77	135	172	720
1995	3,903	23	84	107	152	659
1996	4,359	35	106	122	210	726
1997	4,503	19	83	157	211	847
1998	4,945	28	96	161	223	927
1999	4,586	25	99	143	224	817
2000	4,667	31	69	159	199	891
2001	4,663	24	90	154	218	932
2002	[5]4,626	23	87	139	247	908
2003	4,772	34	91	149	224	936
2004	4,897	24	97	140	243	968

	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire[d]					
	Total	<15	<16	16	17	16–19
1975	[6]3,183	[e]	100	[e]	[e]	719
1976	2,962	[e]	101	[e]	[e]	701
1977	2,924	[e]	104	[e]	[e]	732
1978	3,486	[e]	83	[e]	[e]	855
1979	3,654	[e]	100	[e]	[e]	919
1980	3,902	[e]	117	[e]	[e]	1,050
1981	[7]3,851	[e]	104	[e]	[e]	781
1982	3,593	[e]	103	[e]	[e]	948
1983	3,677	[e]	118	[e]	[e]	968
1984	4,198	[e]	109	[e]	[e]	1,129

	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire[a]					
	Total	<15	<16	16	17	16–19
1985	4,253	[c]—	102	[c]—	[c]—	1,152
1986	4,381	[c]—	97	[c]—	[c]—	1,079
1987	4,361	[c]—	102	[c]—	[c]—	1,071
1988	4,788	[c]—	88	[c]—	[c]—	1,160
1989	4,858	[c]—	89	[c]—	[c]—	1,065
1990	4,801	[c]—	67	[c]—	[c]—	1,484
1991	4,623	[c]—	83	[c]—	[c]—	890
1992	[8]4,102	[c]—	64	[c]—	[c]—	677
1993	[9]4,301	[c]—	79	[c]—	[c]—	589
1994	[10]4,143	35	79	106	130	655
1995	4,224	22	71	134	180	708
1996	[11]4,581	17	74	41	191	810
1997	4,907	21	82	122	254	906
1998	5,012	25	84	134	248	945
1999	5,255	25	103	135	225	939
2000	4,995	23	93	139	219	949
2001	[12]5,028	31	111	137	219	903
2002	[13]5,045	23	82	160	218	876
2003	5,466	32	98	149	224	932
2004	5,203	28	100	145	206	922

[a] Section 1(1) *(c)* that the continuance of the pregnancy would involve risk to the life of the pregnant woman, greater than if the pregnancy were terminated.
Section 1 (4) that the termination is immediately necessary to save the life or to prevent grave permanent injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman.
[b] Age groups shown are where totals are 10 or over and available.
[c] There were boundary changes in Essex and comparable data in some years are not available.
[1] Essex area health authority 1975–1980.
[2] Comparative data for Essex not available 1981–82.
[3] Includes district health authorities for Mid Essex, North East and West Essex from 1983 to 1992.
[4] Includes health authorities for North Essex and South Essex from 1993 to 2001.
[5] Essex strategic health authority. From 2002 includes primary care organisations for Basildon, Billericay, Brentwood and Wickford, Castle Point and Rochford, Chelmsford, Colchester, Epping Forest, Harlow, Maldon and South Chelmsford Southend-on-Sea, Tendring, Thurrock, Uttlesford, Witham, Braintree and Halstead.
[6] There were boundary changes in Befordshire and Hertfordshire and comparable data in some years are not available.
[6] Includes Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire area health authorities 1975–1980.
[7] Includes district health authorities for Northern Bedfordshire, Southern Bedfordshire, North Hertfordshire, East Hertfordshire, North West Hertfordshire and South West Hertfordshire 1981–91.
[8] Includes North Bedfordshire, South Bedfordshire, North West Hertfordshire, South West Hertfordshire district health authorities in 1992.
[9] Includes North Bedfordshire, South Bedfordshire, North West Hertfordshire, South West Hertfordshire and East and North Hertfordshire district health authorities in 1993.
[10] Includes Bedfordshire, North West Hertfordshire, South West Hertfordshire and East and North Hertfordshire district health authorities 1994–95.
[11] Includes Bedfordshire, West Hertfordshire and East and North Hertfordshire Health Authorities 1996–2000.
[12] Includes Bedfordshire. Hertfordshire health authorities in 2001.
[13] Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire strategic health authority. From 2002 includes primary care organisations for Bedford, Bedfordshire Heartlands, Dacorum, Hertsmere, Luton, Northern Hertfordshire and Stevenage, Royston, Buntingford and Bishop's Stortford, South East Hertfordshire, St. Albans and Harpenden, Watford and Three Rivers, Welwyn Hatfield.
[c] Not available.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many abortions were carried out in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Bedford and Hertfordshire strategic health authority at each week of gestation between 18 and 32 weeks in the last year for which figures are available. [15469]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is shown in the table.

Number of terminations by gestation 18–22 weeks and over for residents of Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire and Essex strategic health authorities (SHAs), 2004

Weeks gestation	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire SHA	Essex SHA
18	37	33
19	24	14
20	20	24
21	24	14
22 and over	39	42

Note:
Totals for gestations over 21 weeks are less than ten and therefore not available for release.

Avian Influenza

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures she is taking to prepare for a potential outbreak of avian influenza in the UK. [15764]

Caroline Flint: The World Health Organisation (WHO) has advised that there is a continuing and potentially growing threat that a human influenza pandemic could emerge from the avian influenza (bird flu) currently circulating in South East Asia. The WHO has recognised the United Kingdom as one of the countries with the most developed preparedness plans. We published the UK influenza pandemic contingency plan in March 2005. The plan is currently being revised in light of comments received and an updated version will be published soon. The national health service is putting in place plans to cope with a pandemic as part of general emergency preparedness planning. We have published operational guidance to help NHS planners in this task.

When a pandemic starts, antiviral drugs will be the first line medical intervention. We have purchased 14.6 million courses, enough to treat the 25 per cent, of the UK population anticipated to be affected in a pandemic. The first of these deliveries was received in August and the stockpile will be complete by December 2006. Guidelines on local planning for the distribution of these drugs were published in mid-September 2005.

A specific vaccine for pandemic flu will not start to be available until at least four to six months after the strain causing the pandemic has been identified. However, we are working closely with other countries, the WHO, the European Commission and manufacturers to ensure that a vaccine can be developed as quickly as possible once a pandemic flu strain emerges and to put arrangements in place to ensure production of vaccine for the UK population.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with the World Health Organisation regarding avian influenza. [15766]

Caroline Flint: As a member state of the World Health Organisation (WHO), the United Kingdom is a full and active participant in the work taken forward by the WHO on seasonal, pandemic and avian influenza. The UK cooperates not only on a global basis with the central coordination of the WHO, but also on a regional basis through WHO Euro.

The UK strongly encourages the development and implementation of national contingency plans in line with advice from the WHO and works closely with them, as well as others such as the European Union (EU), to achieve this. UK preparedness plans have been informed by the material available from the WHO. During our presidency of the EU, the UK will be organising a joint WHO/EU presidency meeting on pandemic influenza preparedness in October.

The Department is also working closely with the WHO and other countries to share information and plans for response. The UK was recently visited by representatives of WHO and the EU to discuss national contingency plans and we were commended on our level of preparedness.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with her counterparts in *(a)* Laos, *(b)* the People's Republic of China, *(c)* Indonesia, *(d)* Vietnam, *(e)* Cambodia and *(f)* Thailand on avian influenza. [15841]

Caroline Flint: The United Kingdom supports efforts to increase South East Asia's avian influenza pandemic preparedness through the coordination of international organisations such as the World Health Organisation (WHO), Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and the World Animal Health Organisation. These agencies, notably the WHO and FAO, have the lead role in the co-ordinating the international response and developing coherent plans to address the key issues in the region. The Department therefore works closely with the WHO, and through them other countries, to share information and plans for pandemic flu preparedness.

Contact between the UK Government and these countries would generally be coordinated through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office or the Department for International Development. Officials based in these countries are regularly in touch with WHO representatives and information is passed on to officials in the Department.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what applications for financial support for research into the development of vaccines against the H5NI virus her Department has received; when they were received; what response her Department has made; and if she will make a statement. [17365]

Caroline Flint: We have received two applications for research to develop vaccines against the H5 influenza virus, both from consortia of research workers coordinated by Professor Karl Nicholson from Leicester university.

The first proposal, costing £416,746, was funded in 2000 and work started on 1 January 2001. This was work was scheduled to be completed by August 2004.

The second proposal was an outline of plans for a large consortium of researchers to develop a library of vaccines using reverse genetic engineering. This preliminary proposal, estimated by the researchers to cost at least £4 million and take a minimum of five years, was received in March 2005.

It would be inappropriate to commit such a large amount of public money unless we could be sure the research was of the highest quality and met the needs of the United Kingdom. We commissioned a group of independent experts to help develop a research strategy and this met in June this year. Members of the consortium who made the original bid have been involved in subsequent discussions and hence were aware of the action we have taken.

We are committed to improving research in this area and are working closely with key stakeholders such as the Medical Research Council (MRC) and the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs to develop a joined-up research strategy for the UK and to align this with research strategies in Europe and in other countries. The Department plans to make a call for proposals for specific research on pandemic flu vaccines in the near future. In addition, the MRC has arranged a meeting in early December to discuss a UK-wide strategy for fundamental research related to pandemic flu.

Blood Donation

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will allocate further resources to encourage people in London to give blood. [15828]

Caroline Flint: The National Health Service Blood and Transplant Authority (NHSBT)[1] reports good stocks, which are sufficient to meet current demand. Prior to the establishment of NHSBT, the National Blood Service continually worked to maintain blood stocks through a range of marketing and communication techniques. NHSBT will continue to do so. No additional resources are required to recruit blood donors in London at present.

[1] From 1 October, the National Blood Service and UK Transplant were merged to form the new organisation NHSBT.

The table shows red cell stocks as at 3 October 2005.

	Total red cell stocks
Number of validated units	52,240
Equivalent number of days supply	8.20

In addition to NHSBT stocks, each hospital blood bank will keep an appropriate stock of blood.

Influenza

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the Chief Medical Officer's estimate is of the number of deaths in the UK likely to arise from an influenza pandemic; [17111]

(2) what number of deaths is assumed in the Government's contingency plan for pandemic influenza. [17112]

Caroline Flint: The United Kingdom influenza pandemic contingency plan, published in March 2005, states that 50,000 people or more will die from pandemic influenza. We based this figure upon evidence from seasonal flu and previous pandemics and it has been agreed by the Chief Medical Officer.

Estimates of the number of people who could be affected are difficult to predict, as it depends on the viral strain of the pandemic. Current planning assumptions, based on advice from the World Health Organization, suggest that a pandemic could affect a quarter of the UK population, and estimates of the number of deaths range from around 50,000 upwards. However, the plan recognises that the figures could be significantly higher.

Mifepristone

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many deaths have been associated with mifepristone (Mifeprex) in England and Wales in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [16243]

Jane Kennedy: None.

Pesticides

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to respond to the recent report of the Royal Commission on Environmental Protection's investigation into the impact of pesticides. [18404]

Caroline Flint: We shall be contributing to the Government response, which is being co-ordinated by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The Government is committed to respond to the report within a year of publication.

Smoking

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Government is taking to reduce the number of children and teenagers who smoke. [16351]

Caroline Flint: The Government has a comprehensive strategy in place to tackle smoking, which focuses on action to discourage young people from ever starting, and help for all smokers, of whatever age, to quit. We are aiming to create a climate where non-smoking is the norm, so there is less incentive for young people to take up the habit.

We have banned almost all tobacco advertising, sponsorship and promotion, which has removed the attractive glossy advertisements used to entice young people to try the product. Our highly effective national anti-smoking education campaign is designed to reach people of all ages including young people. Young people who wish to give up smoking can get help from the national health service stop smoking services. In our White Paper, "Choosing Health", we set out proposals to bring in new measures to combat underage sales of tobacco products, and increased enforcement of existing regulations. We will reduce exposure to second-hand smoke and through a staged approach make almost all enclosed public places and workplaces smoke-free. We will hold a consultation later in the year on mandatory picture warnings on tobacco products.

Together this strategy has helped reduce smoking rates in young people aged 11 to 15 years from 13 per cent. in 1996 to 9 per cent. in 2004.

Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority

Michael Jabez Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what special assistance was provided by the Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority to each of the trusts within the area in *(a)* 2002–02, *(b)* 2003–04, *(c)* 2004–05 and *(d)* the current financial year. [15721]

Caroline Flint: Information about special assistance from the NHS Bank to Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority (SHA) for 2002–03 to 2004–05 is shown in table 1. Special assistance has not been provided for 2005–06.

Surrey and Sussex SHA has provided information about the distribution of the money to trusts within the area. This information is shown in table 2.

Table 1: NHS Bank special assistance provided to Surrey and Sussex SHA for 2002–05

	Amount (£ million)
2002–03	30
2003–04	40
2004–05	20
2005–06	0

Table 2: Distribution of NHS Bank special assistance to trusts within the area as provided by Surrey and Sussex SHA

£000

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
National health service trusts			
Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Trust	9,500	18,650	13,000
Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust	4,000	3,500	—
Frimley Park Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	3,000	2,700	—
Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS Trust	2,000	7,250	7,000
Royal West Sussex NHS Trust	1,500	—	—
Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust	7,500	5,900	—
Primary care trusts (PCTs)			
Crawley PCT	688	—	—
East Surrey PCT	487	—	—
Horsham and Chactonbury PCT	575	—	—
Western Sussex PCT	750	—	—
Guildford and Waverley PCT	—	2,000	—
Total	30,000	40,000	20,000

Note:
Special assistance is understood to mean NHS Bank support. No special assistance has been provided to Surrey and Sussex SHA for 2005–06.

Timber

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans her Department has to fund the maintenance of the central point of expertise on timber. [15299]

Jane Kennedy: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my hon. Friend the Minister of State for the Environment (Mr. Morley) to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 160W.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Disability Living Allowance

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of under-16s who applied for disability living allowance in each year since 2002 were successful; and what percentage of successful claimants received *(a)* mobility allowance and *(b)* care allowance. [16836]

Mrs. McGuire: Not all the requested information is available, because data on the number of claims received for disability living allowance are not broken down by age. The information that is available is in the table.

Number of new awards of disability living allowance (DLA) made to children under 16 years of age in the 12 months ending on 28 February in each of years from 2002 to 2005; and the percentage of those awards in which (a) a mobility component and (b) a care component was awarded

	Total number of new awards[1] of DLA to children under 16 years of age	(a) Percentage awarded a mobility component[2]	(b) Percentage awarded a care component[2]
2002	43,100	40.8	96.5
2003	43,800	43.7	95.9
2004	43,500	46.2	93.7
2005	42,500	46.0	95.9

[1] New awards are successful awards resulting from claims for DLA from or on behalf of children not previously in receipt of the benefit and relate to first awards made as a result of initial claims, reviews or appeals. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
[2] The figures for mobility component awards and care component awards include cases in which both components are awarded.
Source:
DWP Information Division, 5 per cent. samples.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average length of time taken to process new claims for disability living allowance for under-16s was in each year since 2002, broken down by region. [16837]

Mrs. McGuire: The information requested is not available because data for clearance times for claims for disability living allowance are not broken down by age.

Freedom of Information

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Freedom of Information Act 2000 requests have been answered by the Department; and in how many cases *(a)* information was wholly exempted, *(b)* information was partly exempted and *(c)* the requests were answered in full. [14965]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my right hon. Friend the Minister of State for Constitutional Affairs, on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2248W.

Hospital Benefits

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the Chancellor's Budget proposals for paying benefits to those in hospital are being implemented. [17207]

Mr. Timms: Yes. We intend to lay regulations shortly to abolish the 52-week hospital down-rating rule, from April 2006.

Pensions Caseworkers

Mr. David Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what pay arrangements the Pensions Ombudsman operates for caseworkers; and whether there is an arrangement by which a caseworker's remuneration is varied according to the number of complaints which are concluded. [16999]

Mr. Timms: Pay arrangements for staff engaged on casework duties reflect the remuneration received by Higher Executive Officers, Senior Executive Officers and Grade 7 civil servants working in the Department for Work and Pensions. They incorporate a limited performance-related element. This takes account of the number of complaints that are concluded as well as the quality of the casework involved.

Winter Fuel Payments

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will raise winter fuel payments in line with recent energy price increases. [16982]

Mr. Timms: We have no plans to do so. The payment has risen from £20 in winter 1997–98 to £200 from winter 2000–01. It is a significant contribution towards fuel costs.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Commercial Court

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact of the quality of the Commercial Court building on the use of English choice of law clauses in international commerce. [16649]

Ms Harman: As part of the development of the business case, an analysis is being undertaken to assess the potential risk of losing Commercial Court business to other jurisdictions. This will be a reason of the justification for providing improved facilities for Commercial Court work and to maintaining its high international reputation.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the progress in renovating the Commercial Court. [16650]

Ms Harman: No decision or action is being, or can be, taken with regard to the renovation of the Commercial Court until the business case has been developed and analysed.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans she has to move the Commercial Court to a different building. [17123]

Ms Harman: My Department is working with Her Majesty's Courts Service to finalise investment plans which will set out what new court building projects and major refurbishments will be taken forward. The

improvement of the accommodation for the Commercial Court features in these plans and has been identified as a priority project within the HMCS Estate strategy.

Correspondence

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the process followed by her Department in responding to correspondence is; and if she will place a copy of the internal departmental guidance on handling correspondence in the Library. [17471]

Bridget Prentice: The guidance issued to staff about how to draft answers to letters from MPs/Peers to the Department is available through my Departments FOI Publication Scheme. The same standard applies to correspondence from members of the public. A copy of the guidance has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Criminal Courts

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether judges have been required to give a fuller introduction to juries since the Lord Justice Auld review on criminal courts. [16471]

Ms Harman: Guidance to trial judges is issued by the Judicial Studies Board in the form of specimen directions and by the Lord Chief Justice in the form of Practice Directions. No specific guidance has been issued to judges on this matter as a result of the recommendations of the Auld review. However, the Judicial Studies Board is reviewing the specimen direction for juries in light of a recent Court of Appeal judgement (R *v.* Karakaya).

Freedom of Information Act

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what definition of recorded information for the purposes of providing information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 is used by the Government. [17469]

Ms Harman: For the purposes of providing information under the Freedom of Information Act, recorded Information is information recorded in any form. This includes information that is held electronically such as on a laptop or electronic records management system; information recorded on paper such as a letter, memorandum or papers in a file; and sound and video recordings including CD or video tape.

The definition of recorded information can be found in the Department for Constitutional Affairs procedural guidance at www.foi.gov.uk

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of improvements achieved by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 over the former Code of Practice on access to Government information. [17470]

Ms Harman: The Code of Practice applied only to central Government, the Freedom of Information Act applies to over 100,000 public authorities right across the public sector.

The Act also requires public authorities to prepare and maintain publication schemes which must be accredited by the Information Commissioner. These schemes set out the information which the public authority makes available as a matter of course, and thus to maintain accreditation, public authorities are required to publish information proactively.

The Freedom of Information Act provides a statutory right of access to official information, matched by a statutory enforcement mechanism. The FOI Act allows those requesting information to appeal to the independent Information Commissioner, while the Code required complaints to be made through an MP submitting a complaint to the Parliamentary Ombudsman. The Information Commissioner is independent of government, and has powers to require public authorities to release information.

The implementation of FOI has resulted in more requests for information than were made under the Code, and far more information being released. Since 1 January, central Government has released more than 10,000 pieces of information in response to FOI requests.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether it is Government policy that *(a)* regional development agencies, *(b)* regional chambers, *(c)* the Local Government Association, *(d)* the Greater London Authority, *(e)* the English Regions Network, *(f)* regional housing boards, *(g)* regional transport boards, *(h)* the Lyons Inquiry into Local Government Funding, *(i)* parish councils and *(j)* the Association of London Government fall under freedom of information legislation. [17472]

Ms Harman: Regional development agencies, the Greater London Authority, parish councils and the Association of London Government are currently covered by the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Information relating to regional housing boards is held by their secretariat, the Government Offices for the regions, who are covered by the Act.

Regional chambers, the Local Government Association, regional transport boards, the English Regions Network and the Lyons Inquiry into Local Government Funding are not covered by the Act. Where there are member organisations that are public authorities, such as local authorities, the information they hold is covered by the Act.

The organisations set out that are not covered by the Act do not meet the current coverage criteria specified in sections 4 and 6 of the Act. However, under section 5 of the Freedom of Information Act, the Secretary of State can bring under the Act an organisation that appears to him to have functions of a public nature. No organisation has yet been covered by the Act in this way. The coverage of the Act is kept under review.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what guidance the Department has produced on the status of non-judicial inquiries established by the Government under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. [17473]

Ms Harman: The Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not establish non-judicial inquiries.

The Explanatory Notes to the Inquiries Act make clear the inter-relationship between Freedom of Information and inquires established under the Inquiries Act.

During the course of an inquiry held under the Inquiries Act, that inquiry is not a public authority and therefore not subject to the Freedom of Information Act. However, once an inquiry has been completed, its records are generally held by a public authority, such as a Government Department or the National Archives and become subject to the Act.

Jury Service

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many and what percentage of people were eligible for jury service in *(a)* each region and *(b)* each London borough in each of the last four years. [16892]

Ms Harman: The information requested is not held centrally. Everyone aged 18 to 70 years on the electoral register is potentially eligible for jury service. Actual eligibility is dependant on personal circumstances.

Law Society

Dr. Cable: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the performance of the Law Society in meeting her target for the satisfactory handling of complaints, as determined by the Legal Services Complaints Commission, in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005 to date; and if she will make a statement. [16935]

Bridget Prentice: The Legal Services Complaints Commissioner (LSCC) was appointed in February 2004 to work with the Law Society to improve complaints handling. In September 2004 the LSCC set targets for the Law Society's performance for 2005—2006. The Law Society began formally reporting against those targets in April 2005.

The Government is encouraged by the progress that the Law Society is making, as evidenced by its performance against the LSCC's targets for the first quarter. Nevertheless, the Government looks forward to continued improvement.

The following table shows the Law Society's complaints handling performance in timeliness, customer satisfaction and quality of decisions against the LSCC targets. These figures are for the first quarter of 2005–06 (April to June 2005).

Percentage

	April 2005 to June 2005	*LSCC target*
Cases cleared within:		
3 months	53	53
6 months	74	75
9 months	83	85
12 months	89	92
18 months	94	98
Customer satisfaction	60	[1]68
Quality of decision	62	[1]70

[1] The customer satisfaction and quality of decision targets have tolerance bands of 65–68 per cent. and 65–70 per cent. respectively. If the Society's performance falls within the tolerance bands, but below the target, they will not receive a penalty fine.

Note:

These figures are taken from the Website of the Office of the Legal Services Complaints Commissioner.

Percentage

	April 2004 to March 2005	*DCA target*
Cases cleared within:		
3 months	51	60
6 months	72	75
9 months	n/a	[1]—
12 months	88	85
18 months	94	97
Customer satisfaction	61	[1]—
Quality of decision	62	75

[1] No target.

Note:

These figures are taken from the Legal Services Complaints Commissioner's Annual Report 2004–05.

Prisoners' Voting Rights

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what response he plans to make to the European Court of Human Rights ruling that denying prisoners the vote is a breach of their human rights; and if she will make a statement. [16925]

Ms Harman: The Government is giving urgent consideration to the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in the case of Hirst *v.* The United Kingdom and will bring forward proposals in due course.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many remand prisoners were eligible to vote in each of the last three general elections; and how many exercised their right to vote in each. [16926]

Ms Harman: The information sought is not available. The Representation of the People Act 2000 made it possible for prisoners on remand, who are otherwise eligible to vote, to register to vote from their place of detention. HM Prison Service records the total number of remand prisoners though no separate record is kept of those remand prisoners who are eligible to vote. Records are not kept of whether particular categories of voters have exercised their right to vote at UK elections.

Unsafe Gravestones

Hywel Williams: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many cases of death or injury caused by unsafe gravestones were recorded in each of the last three years. [17370]

Ms Harman: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply I gave on 13 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 182W.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Child Protection Services

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what governance arrangements for child protection services are in place between trusts, boards and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in Northern Ireland. [17656]

Mr. Woodward: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety provides legislation, policy and procedural guidance to enable boards and trusts to safeguard children and promote their welfare. The Department is responsible for ensuring that boards and trusts have established satisfactory arrangements for the discharge of all child protection functions under the Children (NI) Order 1995 and other relevant legislation and guidance. The Department ensures this through a range of accountability, reporting and monitoring mechanisms.

Boards are responsible for planning to meet child protection needs within their areas through the Children's Services planning process and for commissioning from trusts the full range of child protection services. Each Board has an Area Child Protection Committee overseeing child protection arrangements throughout the board area. Each board is responsible for ensuring that trusts have proper arrangements in place to fulfil all relevant child protection functions under the Children Order, which the Board has delegated to them. Boards have the authority to monitor, evaluate and inspect services directly and to require Trusts to provide them with information on any matter related to the discharge of relevant child protection functions.

Trusts are responsible in law for the discharge of all relevant child protection functions delegated to them by boards. They are accountable to boards and through them to the Department for ensuring that child protection services are provided in accordance with the arrangements set out in the boards' schemes for delegation of statutory functions and to any standards prescribed under the authority of the schemes.

Dementia

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what the implications are for dementia sufferers in Northern Ireland of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence recommendation that certain dementia medications should no longer be available through the NHS; and if he will make a statement. [17597]

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence is reviewing its 2001 appraisal of medicines for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease. As part of this review, the Institute has produced, and consulted on, draft preliminary recommendations that the drugs donepezil, rivastigmine, galantamine and memantine should not be routinely used in treating new patients in the NHS. Following consultation, the institute has deferred publication of its final guidance on these drugs until early next year.

The Department will consider what action is appropriate for Northern Ireland in light of the institute's final guidance on the dementia drugs;

(2) what clinical guidance on dementia medications has been provided by the clinical resource efficiency support team. [17598]

Mr. Woodward: The clinical resource and efficiency support team (CREST) produced interim guidance on new drugs for dementia in February 1998. This guidance covered the drug donepezil, and is available on the CREST website. CREST has issued a letter indicating that the guidance should also apply to the drug rivastigmine.

CREST is reviewing its interim guidance on these drugs and is extending its new guidance to cover all licensed drugs for dementia.

Education and Library Boards

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the obligations are on the Chief Accounting Officer to act in the event of an Education and Library Board acting outside its agreed financial scheme. [17600]

Angela E. Smith: The NDPB Accounting Officer Memorandum in Government Accounting Northern Ireland (GANI) makes clear that, where the Board or Chairperson of any non-departmental public body, including an Education and Library Board, is contemplating a course of action which the Chief Executive as the main Accounting Officer considers would infringe the requirements of propriety or regularity, including the requirement to deliver services within the budget allocated by the Department and voted by Parliament, he/she should set out in writing his/her objection to the proposal; the reasons for this objection and his/her duty to notify the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) should his/her advice be overruled. If the Board decides nonetheless to proceed, the Accounting Officer should seek a written instruction from the Board to take the action in question. He/she should also inform the departmental Accounting Officer of the position, if possible, before the Board takes its decision so that the Department can intervene with the Board. If the outcome is that the Chief Executive is overruled, the Board's instruction should be communicated without undue delay to the Board's external auditors and C&AG.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland under what circumstances a chief accounting officer would be obliged to inform the *(a)* Permanent Secretary of the Department of Education, *(b)* Comptroller and Auditor General and *(c)* Northern Ireland Audit Office that an Education and Library Board has acted outside its financial scheme. [17601]

Angela E. Smith: The NDPB Accounting Officer Memorandum in Government Accounting Northern Ireland (GANI) makes clear that, where the Board or Chairperson of a non-departmental public body is contemplating a course of action which the Chief Executive as the main Accounting Officer considers would infringe the requirements of propriety and regularity, including the requirement for public bodies to live within

the financial allocations voted by Parliament, approved by the Department, the designated Accounting Officer must inform the departmental Accounting Officer, the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) and the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO).

Enzyme Disorders

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what services are available for children in the Province who suffer from enzyme disorders. [17596]

Mr. Woodward: Enzyme deficiency disorders result in a very wide spectrum of clinical consequences depending on the enzyme involved. Most of these disorders are rare and can be grouped under the heading of inherited metabolic disorders. There is a well established weekly clinic at the Royal Belfast hospital for sick children which cares for children with a wide variety of inherited metabolic disorders from all over Northern Ireland.

Equal Opportunities

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he expects the findings of recent research into equality of opportunity in the Northern Ireland labour market to be published. [17599]

Angela E. Smith: It is intended to publish the findings of the labour market dynamics research project in November 2005.

Inquests

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many inquests are outstanding in Northern Ireland; and how many have been waiting more than *(a)* one, *(b)* two, *(c)* three, *(d)* four and *(e)* five years since the death occurred. [16568]

Bridget Prentice: I have been asked to reply.

Each year in Northern Ireland approximately 3,600 deaths are reported to a coroner, of which approximately 7 per cent. result in an inquest.

At the end of September 2005 there were 142 cases outstanding in which a coroner had directed that an inquest will be held but where the inquest had yet to be completed. Of these cases:

17 cases have been waiting less than one year since the date of death;

39 cases have been waiting between one year and two years;

17 cases have been waiting between two years and three years;

nine cases have been waiting between three years and four years;

17 cases have been waiting between four years and five years; and

43 cases have been waiting more than five years.

There are, in addition, approximately 1,600 cases pending investigation, a number of which may involve an inquest but where the coroner has yet to direct whether an inquest will be held. The decision to hold an inquest is, in most categories of death, a judicial decision exercised by the coroner following an investigation including, in some cases, a post-mortem report.

Interpreting Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland from what budget funding for interpreting services at hospitals in the Province comes. [17594]

Mr. Woodward: Interpreting services were initially funded largely from executive programme funds. This funding ceased on 31 March 2005 and since then they have been funded from the totality of resources made available to my Department for the provision of health and social services.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what actions he is taking to ensure appropriate monitoring and evaluation of interpreting services at local hospitals. [17595]

Mr. Woodward: The Department has in place arrangements with trusts for monitoring the use of and demand for health and personal social services (HPSS) interpreting services including information on gaps in supply. The Department has also carried out an evaluation of a pilot project to set up an interpreting service for the HPSS. Taking account of the evaluation findings, the Department is now considering options for future arrangements for procuring interpreting services for the HPSS, including arrangements for monitoring and evaluating how well the interpreting services meet the growing and evolving need.

Medical Notes

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what guidelines exist in Northern Ireland on the period of time that medical notes must be retained. [17114]

Mr. Woodward: In December 2004 the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety issued guidelines entitled "Good Management, Good Records" for managing records in Health and Personal Social Services organisations in Northern Ireland. Various time periods are specified for different types of records.

Nurses

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the number of nurses who have left Northern Ireland to work in *(a)* North America, *(b)* Australia and *(c)* New Zealand in the last 12 months. [17119]

Mr. Woodward: During the year ended 31 March 2005 a total of 893 Nursing and Midwifery staff left the Northern Ireland Health and Personal Social Services (HPSS). This figure will include retirements and those who have left the NI HPSS, to join the NHS in England, Scotland or Wales. Information on the actual destination of leavers is not collected.

Private Health Care

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what inspections of private health care facilities take place in the Province. [17543]

Mr. Woodward: Independent hospitals, clinics and medical agencies have been subject to registration and inspection by the Northern Ireland Health and Personal Social Services Regulation and Improvement Authority since 1 April 2005.

School Bus Services

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what representations he has received on providing an early afternoon bus service for school children in the Southern Board area. [17602]

Angela E. Smith: There have been a total of 78 representations from the following sources concerning the withdrawal of the early afternoon school transport service:

	Number
Members of the public	63
School representatives	3
Members of Parliament	2
MLAs	6
District councils	3
Southern Board	1
Total	78

This is a discretionary service which was provided by the Southern Education and Library Board. The Board reviewed its discretionary provision and, being the only Board to provide a full early afternoon service, it decided to reflect the same level of service availability in other Board areas.

Written Answers to Questions

Friday 14 October 2005

TRANSPORT

Ports (Access Directive)

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will publish the regulatory impact assessment for the EC Directive for Access to Ports; and if he will make a statement. [16326]

Dr. Ladyman: Our initial regulatory impact assessment of this draft Directive has been passed to the Scrutiny Committee of both Houses, and a summary has now been published on the Department's website.

Our assessment concludes that the Commission's initial proposal would probably have an adverse impact on the continued efficiency and effectiveness of UK ports which would not be adequately balanced by any compensating advantage to the sector or its stakeholders. It is the Government's view, therefore, that significant improvements are needed in many aspects of the directive if it is to benefit UK ports and a thorough assessment of potential impacts across Europe will be needed before the European Parliament and Council are in a position to adopt a text.

Flight Paths (Hornsey and Wood Green)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many of the *(a)* London Heathrow airport, *(b)* London Luton airport and *(c)* London Stansted airport standard instrument departure and arrival routes pass over the Hornsey and Wood Green constituency; and if he will make a statement. [17002]

Ms Buck: No standard instrument departure route from any of the three airports crosses directly over Hornsey and Wood Green, although the edge of one noise preferential route lies approximately three kilometres to the west. This is used when aircraft take-off to the east from Heathrow. There are no fixed routes for arriving aircraft as Air Traffic Control require considerable operational flexibility to maintain safe separation between landing aircraft.

Heathrow Airport

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will estimate the number of airplanes using the Biggin Hill stack for Heathrow in each of the last five calendar years. [16406]

Ms Buck: This information is not held by my Department. I have asked the Chief Executive of National Air Traffic Services Ltd. to write to the hon. Member.

Low Level Flying

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the rules governing low level flying above residential areas in North London; and what measures are in place to monitor and enforce the rules. [16992]

Ms Buck: Low flying is governed by the Rules of the Air (Amendment) Regulations 2005 (S.I. 2005/1110). The prohibitions which are relevant to flying above residential areas in North London are:

> The 1,000 feet rule: except with the permission in writing of the CAA, an aircraft flying over a congested area of a city, town or settlement shall not fly below a height of 1,000 feet above the highest fixed obstacle within the horizontal radius of 600 metres of the aircraft.
>
> The land clear rule: an aircraft flying over a congested area of a city, town or settlement shall not fly below such height as will permit, in the event of a power unit failure, the aircraft to land clear of the congested area.

Any reported breach of these regulations is investigated by the Civil Aviation Authority, who are responsible for the enforcement of aviation legislation within the UK.

Newly Qualified Drivers

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research has been undertaken to determine whether the Government should restrict the speed or power of cars that newly qualified drivers may use. [17089]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer to the hon. Member to my answer of 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 90W about graduated licensing.

The on-line reference to the report mentioned in that reply has changed following recent revisions to the TRL Ltd. website. It is now:

http://217.118.128.203/store/report list.asp?pid=211 &pno=4&searchtext=

The scheme in Northern Ireland which requires new drivers to display an "R" plate and restrict speed to 45mph for their first year of driving has been evaluated. This concluded that there is little firm evidence of effectiveness in relation to accident prevention, compliance or offence rates.

The consultation document and decision letter mentioned in my answer of 10 October also considered options for restricting the speed of newly qualified drivers or the power of cars that they may use. The Department concluded that the disadvantages of a lower speed limit for new drivers outweighed the advantages and that it would not be effective to restrict newly qualified drivers to low-powered cars. Even small-engined cars can be driven at speeds well above 70mph and certainly faster than is suitable for many road conditions. The Department considered that the way forward was to focus on improving the educational environment so that learners were better trained and that driver training services were of high quality.

Private Car Park Operators

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the effects of allowing private car park companies access to vehicle keepers' personal details held by the Driver and Vehicle

Licensing Agency; and what checks are in place to ensure practice is consistent with the Data Protection Act 1998. [17146]

Dr. Ladyman: There is no statutory obligation on the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency to assess the effects of the release of information to private car parking enforcement companies. These companies have a right of access to the information under regulations because they are able to demonstrate "reasonable cause" to receive it.

Companies that receive vehicle keeper information have a duty to comply with the guiding principles of the Data Protection Act. They are also invited to sign-up to the Agency's voluntary code of practice which encourages best practice in the use of adequate signs and ticketing arrangements. The code is currently under review.

Railways

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment has been made of the viability of re-opening passenger rail stations at *(a)* Desborough and *(b)* Burton Latimer in Kettering constituency. [17247]

Derek Twigg: My Department has made no such assessment. Any assessment made by the promoter of a reopening scheme would need to take account of a number of factors including any impact on franchise costs and the availability of network capacity.

Railways (Overcrowding)

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the rates of overcrowding on *(a)* South East trains, *(b)* Network Southeast and *(c)* national network trains were in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [15269]

Derek Twigg: The latest figures available are those from 2004. South Eastern Train's count shows that the am peak figure was 2.4 per cent., and the pm peak figure 0.4 per cent. Both results are well below the acceptable 4.5 per cent. level of PIXC. The overall total for all London commuter TOCs was 2.9 per cent.; again this was within the acceptable levels.

Percentage

TOC	*am 2004*	*am 2003*	*pm 2004*	*pm 2003*	*Overall 2004*	*Overall 2003*
c2c	2.2	1.3	1.1	0.6	1.7	1.0
Chiltern	1.6	3.3	0.0	0.8	0.9	2.1
FGWL	2.5	2.0	1.5	0.9	2.1	1.5
one	2.3	1.6	2.4	1.5	2.3	1.6
SLK	4.7	6.0	1.3	2.1	3.1	4.2
SET	2.4	3.1	0.4	0.5	1.5	2.0
SWT	6.8	7.4	1.1	2.8	4.4	5.2
Southern	7.8	4.7	1.8	1.1	5.2	3.1
TLK	2.4	2.3	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.5
WAGN	2.2	1.5	3.3	1.3	2.7	1.4
Total London	4.1	3.8	1.5	1.5	2.9	2.7

Road Safety Cameras

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will take steps to use revenue from road safety cameras to fund advanced driver training and education; and if he will make a statement. [17080]

Dr. Ladyman: Drivers should continue to develop their skills after they have passed the test and we recommend that they consider taking refresher training, particularly if they need to drive as part of their job.

The Safety Camera Programme however has a specific purpose, provided for in the Vehicles (Crime) Act 2001, Section 38 "Unified power for the Secretary of State to fund speed cameras etc". The programme provides police forces and highway authorities with extra resources to support the deployment and operation of safety cameras, from the fines for speeding and red light offences detected, over and above their main funding. The resources provided through the programme cannot be used for other purposes, not provided for in the Act.

Train Services

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the proportion of seats occupied by passengers on peak time Midland mainline train services to and from London *(a)* at the latest date for which figures are available and *(b)* at the end of the current franchise. [17679]

Derek Twigg: As the train operator, Midland Mainline monitors the passenger usage of its services and predicts future levels of demand. Current usage levels, as measured between 1 September 2005 and 6 October 2005, on peak services (defined as any train departing for London before 9 am and all trains leaving London between 4 pm and 7 pm) are 64 per cent. on southbound services and 61 per cent. on Northbound services.

The current Midland Mainline franchise is due to end in April 2008.

The closest estimate to the end of the franchise for peak usage figures is at September 2007 and the estimate is 71 per cent. for southbound services and 68 percent. for Northbound services.

UK Air Travellers (Financial Protection)

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the regulatory report on financial protection for UK air travellers will be published. [17575]

Ms Buck: The Civil Aviation Authority published its assessment of the case for modernising the financial protection of air travellers on 22 September 2005. It is available on its website (www.caa.co.uk).

Waterloo Station

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the platforms at Waterloo made available by the Eurostar move to St. Pancras will be used to accommodate South West train services. [15893]

Derek Twigg: The SRA has recently completed a study into the future use of Waterloo International Platforms. This has been placed in the Libraries of the House and is available on the DfT website. The Study has concluded that there is a strong case to use the platforms for domestic train services once Eurostar have stopped using the station.

A decision on which specific services should use the platforms will be informed by the SRA/DfT Southern Regional Planning Assessment (to be published in spring 2006) the Network Rail Route Utilisation Study for the South West Main Line routes (which will go to consultation in spring 2006) and further work to be carried out by the Department.

Ultimately if South Western train services are to use the platforms then this could be incorporated into the new franchise specification (as an option). It is likely that the earliest that domestic services could use the platforms would be the middle of 2008, following the transfer of Eurostar services and any necessary infrastructure works at Waterloo.

It should also be recognised that other (significant) infrastructure investment may be required on the rail network to fully utilise these platforms given the existing constraints on the approaches to Waterloo which are not impacted upon by the withdrawal of Eurostar. Any infrastructure changes will of course be subject to the normal investment process and subject to a value for money assessment and tests on affordability.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

British Olympics Association

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether members of *(a)* her Department, *(b)* UK Sport and *(c)* Sport England discussed the election of a new chairman of the British Olympic Association with (i) candidates for the post, (ii) potential candidates for the post and *(c)* voting members of the association. [17369]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* I can confirm that prior to the election of the new chairman, I was approached by both a candidate for the post and a voting member of the association who asked for my opinion on the nature and scope of the role.

I can also confirm that the chair of UK Sport was approached by a potential candidate for the post and that they discussed the nature and scope of the role.

No member of Sport England has discussed this matter with any of the identified categories of person.

Casinos

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what steps she is taking to ensure that local communities are consulted by local authorities on plans to introduce casinos in their areas; [17430]

(2) what steps she is taking to ensure that local people are consulted at the earliest opportunity on the possibility of a casino being built in their area. [17431]

Mr. Caborn: We have established an independent Casino Advisory Panel to advise the Secretary of State on her powers under Section 175(4) of the Gambling Act 2005 to specify which local authorities may issue the new casino premises licences created by the Act. The panel will consider submissions from local authorities. We envisage that local authorities will wish to take account of the views of local people, to whom they are accountable, when considering whether to make a submission to the panel.

Under section 166 of the Gambling Act 2005, local authorities may also resolve not to issue casino premises licences in their area. Again, we envisage that local authorities will wish to take account of local views when considering whether to make such a resolution. It is currently anticipated that the Gambling Commission will publish draft guidance to local authorities on the exercise of their functions under the Act, including the use of section 166, later this year.

Under sections 158 and 161 of the Act, people living close to premises which are the subject of an application for a premises licence are interested parties, and may make representations on the application.

Consultation with local people will also take place during both the process of the preparation of land use plans and in relation to planning applications for casinos. Public consultation forms an integral part of the process of preparation of both Regional Spatial Strategies and, at a local level, Local Development Frameworks. If any proposals at a regional level to identify broad locations or, at a local level specific sites, for casinos are included in emerging plans, then they will be subject to public consultation. Similarly, where a planning application is received for a new casino, this will also be subject to the normal statutory requirements for publicity and consultation on planning applications.

Olympic Games

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans there are to include Northern Ireland in the regions that will be asked to host *(a)* the teams of participating countries and *(b)* events as part of the 2012 Olympics. [15263]

Tessa Jowell *[holding answer 10 October 2005]:* Decisions on staging pre-Games training camps for visiting teams will be for individual National Olympic Committees. However, the Government and the British Olympic Association will work to attract visiting teams to the UK before the Games in 2012, and will be providing advice and support to the UK's nations and regions to help them secure the agreement of visiting teams to stage preparation camps in the UK.

At present no Olympic or Paralympic sporting competition is planned to take place in Northern Ireland. If Northern Ireland builds its planned national stadium, we will consider incorporating this venue as a location for the Olympic football competition.

However, the torch relay, and other events as part of the cultural Olympiad are planned to take place in Northern Ireland to help ensure the people of Northern Ireland can be part of and share in the excitement of the 2012 Games.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received on the route the Olympic Torch should take when it comes to London in 2012; and if she will make a statement. [15589]

Tessa Jowell: The Olympic Torch Relay is an important part of our plans for 2012. We intend that the Olympic flame will pass through every town and city in the UK—ending up at the Olympic stadium in time for the opening ceremony. The precise route of the torch relay has not yet been finalised.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the likely impact of the 2012 Olympic Games on Brent; and if she will make a statement. [15590]

Tessa Jowell: We expect the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012 to have significant sporting, social and economic benefits for London and the UK. With the finals and semi finals of the Olympic football competition taking place at Wembley, the people of Brent will be able to share in the excitement of Olympic competition on their doorstep.

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much the 2012 Olympics are expected to cost the average Band D council tax payer in London; and over what period these costs are expected to be borne. [16352]

Tessa Jowell: On the basis of a planned precept of £550 million the 2012 Olympics are expected to cost the average Band D council tax payer £20 per year over a period of around 10 years. The Memorandum of Understanding between the Government and the Mayor of London provides for this period to be extended should it be necessary to raise the further £75 million for which the agreed public sector funding package allows, to take the total precept to £625 million.

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what expenditure was made by the public sector on promoting the successful London 2012 Olympic bid. [16410]

Tessa Jowell: The Government and the London Development Agency (LDA) provided, in equal part, up to £30 million to promote the successful bid for the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what expenditure is budgeted by the public sector for delivering the London 2012 Olympics. [16411]

Tessa Jowell: The public sector funding package, agreed with the Mayor, specifically to deliver a successful London 2012 Olympics is £2.375 billion. However, as the published "Candidate File" explains, the further regeneration of the Lower Lea Valley, including remediation, and the underlying infrastructure, services and utilities, will be met by other contributions from both the public and the private sector.

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the cost of increased security measures needed for the 2012 Olympics in light of the recent terror attacks on London; and whether *(a)* the Government and *(b)* council tax payers in London will meet the extra costs if the 2012 Olympics makes an overall loss. [16678]

Tessa Jowell: Our security planning and budgeting for 2012 has been thorough and detailed. However, we cannot predict at this stage what the security situation will be in 2012. For this reason we are keeping the position under review, advised by the Home Office, the Metropolitan Police and our security services and we have made an allowance for additional security measures.

In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government and the Mayor of London, the cost of any increase in funding over and above the public sector funding package will be met by a sharing arrangement to be agreed, as appropriate, with the Mayor of London and through seeking additional National Lottery funding.

National Sports Foundation

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what progress has been made on decisions on the *(a)* location, *(b)* size and *(c)* organisation of the National Sports Foundation. [15631]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 10 October 2005]:* The Government, along with Sport England and the national governing bodies for Football, Cricket, Tennis, Rugby Union and Rugby League, are currently examining options on how most effectively to deliver the National Sports Foundation. A further announcement will be made in due course.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Core Cities Plan

John Mann: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what timescale has been set on consultation on the core cities plan by the cities themselves. [17811]

Yvette Cooper: The city summits currently taking place in England's core cities are intended to forge a dialogue between central government and localities to realise their full potential and put them in the premier league of cities across Europe. These summits have involved a wide range of stakeholders from the public, private and voluntary sectors. Consultation on the business plans individual cities are being invited to prepare is a matter for the cities themselves and we are not aware that any specific timescale has been set for this. Most business plans are likely to draw on existing plans and programmes at city and city-region level which have already been subject to consultation, so further consultation may not be required.

Departmental Working Groups

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list each departmental working group within his Department. [17228]

Jim Fitzpatrick: To facilitate cross-departmental working there are a number of standing and ad hoc departmental working groups. However, there is no centrally held list of these and to compile one could be done only at disproportionate cost.

Empty Properties

Mr. Forth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many vacant domestic properties there are in England in the *(a)* public and *(b)* private sectors. [16399]

Yvette Cooper: The total number of vacant domestic properties by tenure in England at 1 April 2004 is given in the table.

Vacant dwellings by tenure at 1 April 2004, England

	Number
LA	57,500
RSL	43,300
'Other" public sector	7,400
Private sector (non-RSL)	585,600
Total	693,800

Note:
The total figure has fallen by around 10 per cent. since 1997.

Fire Service

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which functions carried out by local fire control centres will not be carried out by the proposed South East Regional Fire Control Centre; and if he will make a statement. [16874]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Currently, highly trained and experienced control staff spend a considerable proportion of their day on administrative duties rather than taking calls and dealing with incidents. This is an inefficient use of resources. Under the new system, these activities will be handled by administrative staff outside the regional control centres. The activities essential to the running of the control centres are included in a comprehensive document on scope that has already been widely reviewed within the Fire and Rescue Service. A questionnaire on out-of scope activities is currently on circulation to individual fire and rescue services. Analysis of the responses when completed will fully define those activities which are not in the scope of the control centres. It will identify those which are related to the running of the fire and rescue service but not to the control centres, and those which are not related to FRS activity at all.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* anticipated costs, *(b)* estimated savings and *(c)* changes in response times he expects following the introduction of a South East Regional Fire Control Centre; and if he will make a statement. [16875]

Jim Fitzpatrick: No detailed costs and savings for the South East are available at present as the FiReControl business case exists at national level only. Nationally, over a 15 year period (2004–05 to 2018–19) running the control service and implementing the FiReControl project will cost £988 million at 2005 prices. Leaving the control service in the existing 46 controls would cost £1,090 million. After the final control centre goes live, there will be annual savings of over £20 million (30 per cent. reduction in annual running costs) which will be available for spending on other local initiatives such as community fire safety. The criteria for the project include ensuring that response times will be as good as or better than those achieved at present, and the project includes features that will help to reduce response times. These include the creation of a national network and dynamic mobilising of appliances i.e. mobilising direct to the vehicles which are closest to the incident, wherever these may be.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place a copy of the full business case for a South East Regional Fire Control Centre in the Library. [16876]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The business case for the FiReControl Project has been drawn up on a national basis. The Outline Business Case for the project, which is detailed enough to allow an assessment of the strength and structure of the case for the project, is available on the project website at www.firecontrol.odpm.gov.uk. The full national business case can only be produced after completion of the infrastructure services procurement, as it needs to include the actual costs arising from that procurement rather than estimates. Information from the business case as it is updated is being shared with representatives of Fire and Rescue Authority treasurers, including a representative from the South East, in the FiReControl Finance Working Group.

John McDonnell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the costs of the *(a)* Global Positioning System and *(b)* providing a secondary high data bearer for use by FireControl will be attributed to (i) the FireControl Project and (ii) the FireLink Project. [16877]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The cost of the Global Positioning System will be met by the FireLink Project. The provision of a secondary high speed data bearer (for England only) will be provided under the FiReControl Project.

John McDonnell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether either of the remaining bidders for the FireLink Project have met the original user requirements for the project. [16878]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The outcome of the FireLink procurement will be announced shortly.

John McDonnell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the provisional timetable is for the FireLink Project. [16879]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The ODPM currently expects to award the FireLink contract in November 2005 with roll-out completed in Great Britain by 2009.

Green Belt

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many acres of undeveloped green belt there have been in *(a)* the County of Bedfordshire and *(b)* the parliamentary constituency of Mid-Bedfordshire in each year since 1997. [16621]

Yvette Cooper: The ODPM holds insufficient data to provide yearly estimates of the extent of undeveloped green belt in Bedfordshire or in the parliamentary constituency of Mid-Bedfordshire. In 1997 the extent of green belt in Bedfordshire amounted to 28,240 hectares

of which 630 hectares are estimated to be built-up land. Therefore undeveloped green belt land in Bedfordshire in 1997 was around 27,610 hectares. The extent of green belt in 2003 remained the same as in 1997.

Growth Areas (Public Utilities)

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the state of readiness of public utilities to provide service to the planned growth areas in southern England and the South Midlands. [16527]

Yvette Cooper: Depending on its scale and pace, growth will require potentially major upgrades to utilities infrastructure with significant lead-in times (often three to five years). Our objective is to encourage adequate long-term planning by the utilities to avoid delivery of growth being constrained or prevented by the late programming of investment. The role of the public sector is principally to help ensure that the utility companies are properly equipped with the information needed to plan for growth, as well as providing maximum certainty around the magnitude, timing, and location of growth.

Public consultation and examination of growth plans for the Milton Keynes/South Midlands sub region involved a number of the major utilities or their representatives and the sub regional growth strategy was published in March this year. To follow this up local authorities and delivery agencies in the growth areas liaise with the utility companies to ensure that, as sub regional plans and Local Development Framework information becomes available, the utility companies can update their plans for investment.

House Building

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the timetable is for the implementation of the Barker Report. [15225]

Yvette Cooper: The Government will set out its final response to Kate Barker's recommendations by the end of 2005.

Progress in implementing Kate Barker's recommendations has already been made:

In the pamphlet "Extending Home Ownership", launched by the Deputy Prime Minister and the Chancellor on 25 May, we confirmed that the merger of regional planning bodies and regional housing boards would go ahead. We also said that we would shortly announce further details about how independent evidence and analysis to support regional planning bodies would be strengthened.

In the 2004 Spending Review, we made a start on infrastructure investment in creating a Community Infrastructure Fund, as recommended by Barker. An extra £50 million in 2006–07 and £150 million in 2007–08 will be available to finance transport projects needed to sustain housing growth.

The Chancellor also allocated funds which, with additional PFI funding and efficiency gains, aim to provide an extra 10,000 new homes for social let annually by 2007–08.

Consultation on changes to planning policy guidance on housing (PPG3) ended on 9 September and responses are currently being collated.

Housing

John Mann: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many new houses will be built through housing renewal pathfinders in each of the next five years. [17808]

Yvette Cooper: Funding for the nine housing market renewal pathfinders has only been allocated up to the end of March 2006. In total the programme is planned to deliver 3000 new homes by that date.

John Mann: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many shared ownership schemes were provided by housing renewal pathfinders in the last year for which figures are available. [17810]

Yvette Cooper: Five shared ownership schemes have been part funded by the housing market renewal pathfinders in the last year.

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the residential housing density per hectare has been in *(a)* London, *(b)* the South East and *(c)* England in each of the last 20 years. [16558]

Yvette Cooper: The available estimates are for densities of new residential dwellings, from Land Use Change Statistics, and are shown in the table attached.

Density of new residential dwellings built: London, South East and England, 1985–2004

	Dwellings per hectare		
	London	*South East*	*England*
1985	22	11	12
1986	28	16	17
1987	44	20	21
1988	54	23	23
1989	47	24	25
1990	45	20	23
1991	45	24	26
1992	49	23	25
1993	48	22	26
1994	44	22	24
1995	48	21	24
1996	56	23	25
1997	51	23	25
1998	54	23	25
1999	56	22	25
2000	56	24	25
2001	48	24	25
2002	56	26	27
2003	80	33	34
2004 (provisional)	83	43	40

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what estimate his Department has made of future residential housing density per hectare in *(a)* London, *(b)* the South East and *(c)* England; and if he will make a statement; [16559]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the optimal housing density for environmental sustainability; and if he will make a statement. [16560]

Yvette Cooper: Planning Policy Guidance Note 3, "Housing (PPG3)", sets out the Government's aim of making the best use of land, by encouraging housing developments of between 30 to 50 dwellings per hectare (dph) and a greater intensity of development in highly accessible locations. For the purposes of Public Service Agreement 6, the Government have set the target that

average density of new housing development in each English region should reach at least 30dph, and in London at least 50dph, by 2006.

"Land Use Change Use Statistics", published in July 2005, indicate that in 2004, new house-building was built at an average density in the Government Office Regions of London and the South East of 83 and 43dph respectively, and 40dph nationally.

Local planning authorities should have regard to the density policies set out in PPG3 in formulating their development plan policies and in determining planning applications for housing development. If there are local circumstances which justify a departure from national policy at the local level, these should be set out in the plan. There is no optimal density for environmental sustainability as this will depend on the particular circumstances of a local authority's area, such as the location and accessibility of potential development sites and the potential for improving such accessibility.

In the autumn, the Government intend to publish for consultation a new draft Planning Policy Statement 3, which will set out a new national policy framework for planning for housing and will replace existing PPG3.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many dwellings have been built as a result of section 106 agreements between local authorities and property developers in each year since 1990. [15582]

Yvette Cooper: The number of dwellings built in England as a result of section 106 agreements is table below. The numbers include social housing for rent and other types of affordable housing such as share ownership. Information has only been collected centrally since 2000–01.

Social housing

	Number of dwellings
2000–01	9,305
2001–02	10,300
2002–03	12,595
2003–04	16,380

Source:
Local authority Housing Strategy Returns to ODPM

Planning (Rural Sub-Plot Sales)

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of his Department's circular letter of 19 April 2004 to chief planning officers in assisting local authorities to deal with the problem of small sub-plot sales of rural land; [17669]

(2) if he will make a statement on his Department's review of Article 4 Directions in respect of the Town and Country Planning Acts (General Permitted Development) Order; [17670]

(3) how many representations his Department has received since 1 January 2004 from *(a)* hon. Members, *(b)* local authorities and *(c)* others on the sale to speculators of small sub-plot sales of rural land. [17671]

Yvette Cooper: The letter to which the hon. member refers was a reminder to local authorities of their existing powers in this area. It also alerted them to forthcoming guidance on the use of section 215 notices, which ODPM published in January. The letter was advisory only, and information about representations is not kept in the manner requested.

We expect to consult later this year on two changes to Article 4 Direction procedure, and also on some new guidance to replace that issued in DoE Circular 9/95, General Development Order Consolidation 1995. The proposed legal changes will increase a local planning authority's power to make directions without having to wait for the Secretary of State's approval, and enable them to bring directions into immediate effect where it is difficult to trace owners of all the land covered by a direction.

Parliamentary Questions

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many written parliamentary questions tabled in this session to him for which the date for answer has passed and have not yet been answered. [15247]

Jim Fitzpatrick: In the current session of Parliament, 1,363 parliamentary questions have been tabled to my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister. At 10 October 2005, 11 questions that were due for answer before that date were awaiting a reply, but all of them will receive an answer.

Pensions (Haringey Council)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the financial position of the London borough of Haringey council pension scheme. [16993]

Mr. Woolas: The most recent actuarial valuation of the London borough of Haringey council pension fund, carried out on 31 March 2004, showed that its assets represented 69 percent. of accrued liabilities. Following the valuation, contribution rates for all the participating employers in the fund were set by the actuary for the triennial period ending 31 March 2008 to ensure its ongoing solvency. The next valuation takes place on 31 March 2007.

CABINET OFFICE

Ministerial Vehicles

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (1) how many vehicles were purchased by the Government Car and Despatch Agency in 2004–05, broken down by country of manufacture; [15152]

(2) if he will establish an inquiry into the procurement policies of EU governments for ministerial vehicles, with particular reference to the purchase of domestically-produced vehicles. [15153]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The responsibility for the provision of ministerial cars and drivers has been delegated under the terms of the framework document to the Government Car Despatch Agency. I have asked its Chief Executive Mr. Roy Burke to write to the right hon. Member. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library.

Ombudsmen

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list the ombudsmen set up by the Government to administer complaints against Government Departments or agencies. [17668]

Mr. Hutton: The Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (the parliamentary ombudsman) investigates complaints relating to injustice caused by maladministration on the part of central government departments, including their agencies.

In addition, there are a number of independent complaint-handling bodies set up to investigate complaints relating to specific areas of Government business. A detailed list of these bodies is not held centrally, and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Online Transactions

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what estimate he has made of the proportion of transactions conducted online in respect of *(a)* company registrations, *(b)* first-time vehicle registrations, *(c)* vehicle licence renewal, *(d)* university applications, *(e)* income tax returns and *(f)* crime reporting in (i) 2000 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available. [16929]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Cabinet Office does not hold centrally figures for the year 2000.

The figures, where available, for the proportion of transactions made online or via other electronic channels are as follows:

(a) Company registrations. Figures for 2005 show 80 per cent. take up of electronic services.

(b) First time vehicle registrations. Figures for 2005 show 79 per cent. take up of electronic services

(c) Electronic applications for vehicle tax disks. Figures for 2005 show 16 per cent. take-up of applications eligible for the electronic service.

(d) University Applications. Figures for 2005 show 73 per cent. take-up of electronic services.

(e) Online self assessment tax. Figures for 2005 show 17 per cent. take-up of electronic services.

(f) Crime Reporting: There were 23,453 notifications of crime complaints from the public via the internet using the Police Portal for the last full year for which figures are available. [1]

[1] Figure provided by the Home Office.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Climate Change

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimates her Department had access to in respect of the costs of major climate-related natural disasters across the world in each year from 1980 to date. [17184]

Mr. Morley: Annual estimates of climate-related natural disasters across the world are produced by major re-insurance companies. Munich Re, for example, has been tracking the economic and insured losses as a result of natural and weather-related catastrophes since the 1970s. In the last few years, it has published annual reviews of natural catastrophes. Estimates for 2004 suggest that economic losses due to weather-related natural catastrophes amounted to over US$100 billion.

Such work was also reported by the IPCC in its third assessment report (2001), which showed that the costs of ordinary and catastrophic weather events exhibited a rapid upward trend in recent decades. Yearly global economic losses from catastrophic events increased from US$4 billion in the 1950s to US$40 billion a year in the 1990s.

Energy Efficiency

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the merits of introducing minimum standards for energy efficiency across the full range of appliances and lighting. [18394]

Mr. Morley: The Government remains fully committed to raising product standards and encouraging consumers to use the most efficient products available.

As a member of the European single market the Government cannot, by itself introduce mandatory minimum standards in the UK which would prevent the free trade of products on the basis of their energy efficiency. In order to do this we need to persuade the European Commission and other member states that this is necessary across the EU.

The recently agreed eco-design for energy using products (EUP) framework directive will provide a streamlined and effective route for setting EU-wide environmental requirements for traded goods such as boilers, fridges, air-conditioning and consumer electronics. EUP will provide the forum for considering options and priorities and for establishing energy efficiency standards for these products.

Based on evidence gained from the use of existing directives aimed at removing inefficient fluorescent lighting ballasts, hot-water boilers and refrigeration products which will now be incorporated into EUP it is estimated that by 2020 EUP alone could save around 10 percent. of the EU's total annual energy consumption.

The UK is working proactively with the Commission and other member states to influence and speed the delivery of measures under EUP.

Although the focus of the directive is on setting mandatory standards, a clear intention is to encourage voluntary action by manufacturers to improve their products, which would make regulatory action unnecessary.

EU Energy Directive

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what position he has adopted in respect of Article 13 of the draft EU directive on energy end-use and energy services. [17267]

Mr. Morley: Article 13 of the draft EU directive on energy end-use efficiency and energy services sets out a number of requirements relating to the metering and billing of energy consumption. We believe that these

provisions, where they can be shown to be both technically feasible and cost-effective, will act as an important driver for delivering significant improvements in the information available to UK consumers about their own energy consumption. Under our presidency of the EU, we are working closely with other member states, the European Commission and the European Parliament to take forward negotiations on this important dossier with the aim of securing early adoption.

Fluoridation

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what monitoring is being carried out on the levels of fluoridation in drinking water in the Greater London area; and if she will make a statement. [16964]

Mr. Morley: Water companies supplying drinking water to consumers in London carry out routine monitoring for fluoride as set out in the water supply, water quality regulations 2000. Consumers have access to this information about the drinking water supply to their home or workplace through water company public registers. The information is also published by the Drinking Water Inspectorate in their annual report.

Note:

Natural levels of fluoride in the London area vary from zone to zone but typically the amount is 0.2 mg per litre and the maximum recorded in recent years is 0.5 mg per litre.

British-Irish Council (Sellafield)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the British-Irish council *(a)* she has and *(b)* her Ministers have attended since 1 January 2000; on how many occasions the issue of Sellafield and associated radioactivity matters was raised; and if she will make a statement. [17176]

Mr. Morley: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, has not attended any of the meetings of the British-Irish council since 1 January 2000. My predecessor and I have attended six meetings of the British-Irish council environment sectoral group. The issue of Sellafield and associated radioactivity matters has been raised at five of those meetings.

Ireland and the Isle of Man tabled a revised version of a joint discussion paper on Sellafield and radioactive waste at the fifth meeting of the British-Irish council on 8 July 2004. Detailed consideration of the paper has been deferred until the legal action initiated by Ireland under the UN convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) against the UK over Sellafield has been resolved.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

A-level Grades

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what factors she took into account in deciding to bring forward proposals to hold back a proportion of university places for offers based on actual rather than predicted A-level grades; [17315]

(2) if she will make a statement on proposals to reform university admissions in respect of predicted and actual A-level grades. [17318]

Bill Rammell: Over the years, there have been consistent calls for the introduction of a system of applications to higher education based on students' actual achievements rather than predicted grades. These include, in 1997 Sir Ron (now Lord) Dearing's National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education, and Sir Mike Tomlinson in his Inquiry into A Level Standards in 2002. Most recently, in his report on Fair Admissions to Higher Education, Professor Steven Schwartz concluded that the current system, relying on predicted grades, more than half of which are inaccurate, cannot be fair. That is why, in September 2004, the then Secretary of State for Education and Skills asked for work to be carried out to identify ways to resolve the practical issues associated with implementing a new system based on known examination results.

On 9 September 2005, after detailed work with key stakeholders, the Department launched a public consultation making a number of proposals for changes to the higher education applications system including a proposition that predicted exam results should play no part in applications and admissions decisions. Analysis confirming the extent to which predicted grades are inaccurate was provided in a report prepared for the University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) ("Estimating the Reliability of Predicted Grades"). This analysis confirmed that only 45 per cent. of predicted grades are accurate and that they are most inaccurate for students from lower socio-economic groups.

The consultation document proposes a number of changes to the existing higher education applications process that could be made by the academic year 2008/09. In the longer term, it also acknowledges that there can be more than one way of achieving the objectives of a post-qualification applications system and sets out two possible approaches on which it is seeking views. One would involve institutions making no formal offers of places until after exam results; the other would see some places offered before results and a proportion of places reserved until afterwards. The consultation also welcomes the idea that new approaches may appear as a result of the discussion it will stimulate. The consultation runs until 5 December, after which there will be a period to analyse the responses and post a summary on the consultation website.

Hayward Report

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the Permanent Secretary approved her Department's presentation of and press release on Dr. Hayward's report on the University and College Admissions Service. [17208]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* The Permanent Secretary was not personally involved in clearing the press release, nor in the arrangements for announcing the consultation on Improving the Higher Education Applications Process which drew on Dr. Hayward's report to UCAS on the reliability of predicted examination grades. These functions were carried out by departmental officials. In so doing, there was a genuine and regrettable mistake in the press

release that referred to a finding that was not supported by the UCAS report. I have apologised for this publicly. This inaccuracy however should not be allowed to obscure the important fact that the majority of predicted results are inaccurate and that they are most inaccurate for students from lower socio-economic groups. The intention is to develop a fair system for all students. Different groups over time have argued that predicted results should play less of a role in higher education applications and admissions decisions.

PRIME MINISTER

Ministerial Conduct

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Prime Minister what restrictions exist on former Ministry of Defence Ministers taking up employment with companies which they may have dealt with during their periods in office; and if he will make a statement. [17889]

The Prime Minister: The rules for Ministers on the acceptance of appointments after leaving ministerial office are set out in section 5.29 of the Ministerial Code.

DEFENCE

Nuclear Deterrent

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the adaptability of Astute class submarines for carrying a nuclear missile system. [17213]

John Reid: *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* As my predecessor made clear previously on 30 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 318W, work has been undertaken to keep options open in considering platforms to carry the Trident D5 missile in the longer term pending future decisions on any replacement for Trident. However, while decisions on any replacement for the Trident system are likely to be required in the current Parliament, they are still some way off and Ministers have not yet begun to consider the position on this issue in any detail. It is therefore too early to speculate on the merits of any particular option.

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what steps he will take to ensure a full debate on the future of the UK's nuclear deterrent; and whether these will include the publication of a White Paper; [17211]

(2) whether a final decision on the replacement of Trident will be subject to a vote of the House; and whether he expects that the decision will be made during this Parliament. [17212]

John Reid *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* While decisions on the long term future of the UK nuclear deterrent are likely to be necessary in the current Parliament, they are still some way off. It is therefore too early to say what formal or informal procedures might be used to underpin future decision-making by the Government in this area.

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the viability of an aircraft delivery platform for nuclear missiles. [17214]

John Reid *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* Decisions on any replacement for Trident have not yet been taken. While decisions are likely to be required in the current Parliament, they are still some way off and Ministers have not yet begun to consider the position on this issue in any detail. It is therefore too early to speculate on the merits of any particular option.

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what work has been undertaken by his Department on an extension of the service of Trident D5 missiles. [17210]

John Reid *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* Work by officials is ongoing within the Ministry of Defence preparatory to consideration by Ministers of options for the future of the UK's independent nuclear deterrent. Alongside other options, these studies have looked at the possibility of extending the service of Trident D5 missiles in the UK.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AIDS/HIV

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much has been spent on AIDS and HIV *(a)* prevention and *(b)* treatment in developing countries in each year since 1997. [16996]

Mr. Thomas: DFID's AIDS expenditure data is not collected according to whether spending is on prevention or treatment activities. DFID's system for assessing the policy focus of all bilateral expenditure—the "Policy Information Marker System" (PIMS)—measures the extent to which projects are targeted to achieve the millennium development goals.

DFID has a commitment to spend at least £1.5 billion on HIV and AIDS over the three years, 2005–2008.

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate he has made of the average number of people in developing countries born with AIDS or HIV each day in the last 12 months. [16997]

Mr. Thomas: The UK relies on the Joint United Nations programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) to provide AIDS statistics. There are currently no estimates of the numbers of people born with HIV each day in the past 12 months. According to the UNAIDS 2004 AIDS Epidemic update, it is estimated globally that 2.2 million children under 15-years were living with HIV in 2004. The estimated number of new infections globally amongst children aged under 15, in 2004 was 640 000.

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate he has made of the average number of children in developing countries orphaned by AIDS or HIV each day in the last 12 months. [16998]

Mr. Thomas: The UK relies on the Joint United Nations programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) to provide AIDS statistics. There are currently no estimates of the number of children being orphaned by AIDS each day. According to the UNAIDS 2004 Report on the global AIDS epidemic, it is estimated

globally that there were 15 million orphans due to AIDS living in 2003. Of this number, it is estimated that 12.1 million orphans due to AIDS were living in sub-Saharan Africa in 2003.

Developing Nations

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what actions are being taken by his Department to help developing nations to manage their own economies effectively. [17033]

Hilary Benn: Countries can only eliminate poverty, and make lasting improvements in delivery of basic services, if they generate sustainable economic growth. Supporting good economic management is therefore a top priority for development assistance.

Donor assistance is most effective when it supports policies which are developed by the partner government. DFID and other donors therefore encourage partner countries to develop national poverty reduction plans, with a strong focus on growth and on good management of public finances. 70 countries now have plans, or are in the process of preparing them. DFID supports such plans with financial aid, and through the provision of expert advice where countries request this.

Famine Relief

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what support his Department has given *(a)* Mali, *(b)* Bukina Faso and *(c)* Mauritania for famine relief in the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [16908]

Hilary Benn: 175,000 children under the age of five in Mali, and 57,000 vulnerable people in Burkina Faso are receiving emergency feeding with DFID support. DFID sent a humanitarian assessment team to both countries in the second week of August to complement our close monitoring of the regional nutritional crisis and to identify how DFID might best respond. As a result, we have provided $1.2 million (£675,000) to support the relief efforts in the two countries. $1 million is supporting the World Food Programme's (WFP) emergency operation in Mali, and $200,000 to support the Catholic Relief Services' work in Burkina Faso.

These allocations bring the total amount of DFID funding for the countries of the Sahel region, including Niger, to £3.925 million. In Mauritania, nutritional surveys undertaken by partners have not revealed a significant crisis. The WFP has a three year feeding operation there which is funded sufficiently well to cope with the immediate and imminent need. We are actively verifying whether current responses continue to be sufficient in the countries of the region. If we find that this is not the case, we will respond.

Mudslides

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what discussions he had with the Government of *(a)* Mexico, *(b)* Guatemala and *(c)* El Salvador about providing assistance (i) to the relief operation and (ii) reconstruction to those who have been affected by the recent mud slides; [18251]

(2) what assistance the UK Government has provided to the countries of Central America following the recent mud slides. [18252]

Mr. Thomas: The impact of hurricane Stan, bringing heavy rains affecting the entire region from Mexico to Costa Rica has led to overflowing rivers, flooding of low-lying areas as well as landslides creating loss of life and severe difficulties for many rural communities in Guatemala and El Salvador. Some communities in El Salvador were also affected by the eruption of the Santa Ana volcano on 1 October 2005.

The worst affected countries are Guatemala and El Salvador. In both countries the National Emergency Response agencies are providing food, water and basic relief items. The European Community Humanitarian Office has already contributed approximately £1.2 million for emergency relief in El Salvador and Guatemala. At present, our focus is in supporting the immediate relief effort. DFID is providing some £460,000 to this, including our share of the European Community assistance.

Oil Extraction

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the impact on developing countries of the extraction of oil in those countries, in terms of *(a)* their economies and *(b)* climate change; and if he will make a statement. [17888]

Hilary Benn: Some developing countries highly dependant on the revenues from oil exhibit high levels of corruption, conflict, environmental degradation and poverty. But this is not inevitable. Oil can and should make a major contribution to poverty reduction and sustained economic growth, if it is managed wisely and the revenues earned used properly and fairly. For this reason, the UK Government set up and now takes the lead on the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). This provides assistance to countries and companies seeking to increase the transparency of payments by oil, gas and mining companies and revenues received by host governments. Progress has already been made, for example, in Azerbaijan, the first audited reports have been published and are being discussed by the Azeri people.

The causes of climate change are largely due to the use of fossil fuels in industrialised countries. These countries have the primary responsibility to reduce their own emissions of energy related, greenhouse gases and lead by example. The UK is acting to reduce emissions, both nationally and internationally. We have set demanding domestic targets to cut emissions and expand the use of renewable energy and are also working to promote international agreement on a global framework to tackle climate change to follow the Kyoto protocol in 2012. Through our G8 and EU presidency initiatives on climate change, we are promoting a new international dialogue on climate change, clean energy and sustainable development and agreed a range of measures to help developing countries adopt more efficient, lower carbon energy technologies.

HEALTH

Acute Hospital (North Bristol)

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what land value per acre was assumed by North Bristol NHS Trust for *(a)* the Frenchay site and *(b)* the Southmead site in preparing its plans for a new acute hospital in North Bristol; and if she will make a statement. [17035]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* The Department does not hold this information. This is a matter for the trust.

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many inpatient beds there were at *(a)* Frenchay hospital and *(b)* Southmead hospital in each of the last five years; and how many in-patient beds will be provided at the proposed new acute hospital on the Southmead site. [17036]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* The Department does not hold figures for in-patient beds by hospitals. However, figures for North Bristol National Health Service Trust are available on the Department's website at:

www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity/data_requests/beds_open_overnight.htm

Figures for in-patient beds to be provided at the proposed new acute hospital on the Southmead site are not held centrally.

Alzheimer's Disease

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice she has received from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence concerning the availability of drug treatments for Alzheimer's disease on the national health service; and what cost benefit analysis underpinned that advice. [16984]

Jane Kennedy: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) published its initial advice on drugs for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease in 2001. NICE is currently reviewing this guidance. Details of the methodologies used by NICE, including the cost benefits analysis methodology, are available on its website at www.nice.org.uk.

Cancer Treatment

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to improve cancer treatment waiting times in East Sussex; and what Government targets have been set for cancer treatment in East Sussex for 2005–06. [17289]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* The NHS Cancer Plan sets out our strategy to improve cancer services throughout England, including East Sussex. There are two Government targets for cancer treatment, both concerning waiting times. They are that there is a maximum 31-day wait from diagnosis of cancer to start of treatment, and a maximum 62-day wait from urgent referral for suspected cancer to first treatment. These targets must be achieved from the end of December 2005.

Chiron

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the reason was for the failure of Chiron to supply diamorphine to the NHS at the end of 2004; how much warning was given by Chiron of their imminent failure to provide the expected supplies; and what assessment she has made of the prospects for Chiron's supply of the product to be restored. [16343]

Jane Kennedy: On 16 December 2004, Chiron, the major supplier of diamorphine injection in the United Kingdom, informed the Department that its supplies of this product were limited. This was due to production problems experienced at its manufacturing plant. Chiron has recently resumed production, but can only supply limited quantities, and the product is likely to remain in short supply for the coming months.

Departmental officials and the National Health Service Purchasing and Supply Agency remain in contact with the manufacturers of diamorphine and other opiates and continue to monitor the supply situation closely.

Cystic Fibrosis

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make it her policy to exempt cystic fibrosis sufferers from paying prescription charges; and if she will make a statement. [17152]

Jane Kennedy: We have no plans to extend the existing list of medical conditions that give exemption from prescription charges. The list has been reviewed on a number of occasions, but no clear cut case for extending it has emerged. There is no consensus on what additional conditions might be included in any revised list of medical exemptions, or how distinctions could be drawn between one condition and another.

The extensive exemption and change remission arrangements mean that 87 per cent. of prescriptions are dispensed free of charge. As a result, many people whose medical conditions are not on the exempt list already get free prescriptions on other grounds.

Departmental Funding

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been allocated to the Department in each year since 1975. [11521]

Mr. Byrne: From 1975 to 1997, allocations made in the public expenditure survey were reported in the autumn statements with detailed breakdowns in the expenditure plans White Papers. Since 1997, allocations made in the spending review rounds are reported in Spending Review White Papers.

Endometriosis

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will expand the range of treatment available at Poole NHS Hospital Trust for Dorset patients with endometriosis; [18163]

(2) if she will make all types of laparoscopic treatment for endometriosis available at Poole hospital. [18164]

Caroline Flint: The Government sets the national agenda, puts in place national standards and provides the overall health service funding. Local trusts, in partnership with their health community, now have responsibility for local issues. It is therefore appropriate that they respond to issues concerning their services.

Dorset and Somerset strategic health authority, the local headquarters of the national health service has advised that Poole Hospital NHS Trust provides routine endometriosis services, including a limited range of laparoscopic procedures.

However, the hon. Member may wish to raise this issue with Mr. Lloyd Adams, chief executive at Poole Hospital NHS Trust directly.

Ethical Issues

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions she has had with *(a)* hon. Members, *(b)* Members of the House of Lords and *(c)* organisations concerning the development of policy on (i) assisted suicide, (ii) euthanasia and (iii) abortion; and if she will make a statement. [15491]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Departmental records have been checked and there is no record of my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Health, meeting to discuss the development of assisted suicide, euthanasia or abortion policy with hon. or right hon. Members, Members of the House of Lords or organisations.

Foundation Trusts

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether foundation trusts are required to sign up to the code of practice on ethical recruitment. [16645]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 10 October 2005]:* Ministers expect national health service foundation trusts to follow best practice guidelines in the provision of health care. This includes the code of practice for the international recruitment of health care professionals.

GP Practices

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 12 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 974W, on GP practices, how many GPs are expected to reach retirement age in each year until 2015 using the same format as that given in the Department's 2002 Public Expenditure Questionnaire Memorandum to the Health Select Committee. [14212]

Mr. Byrne: The estimated number of general practitioners (GPs) excluding retainers and registrars, projected to leave the national health service workforce at age 55 or above each year is shown in the table. This assumes the continuation of existing working patterns and that the proportion of leavers in each age group will remain the same as the average numbers of leavers over the period 1999–2004.

These leavers will include staff who take career breaks, or take up work outside England or outside the NHS. Some will return, these numbers are therefore not the same as retirements.

GP practices

	Number
2005	832
2006	833
2007	837
2008	840
2009	848
2010	841
2011	843
2012	850
2013	857
2014	862
2015	864

These figures need to be seen in context: the number of GPs has increased by 3,601 (13 per cent.) since 2000 and we anticipate there will continue to be healthy recruitment into general practice.

Meals on Wheels

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many meals on wheels were distributed in each London borough in each year since 1997; what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the fair access to social care initiative; and if she will make a statement. [15815]

Jane Kennedy: This information is not centrally available. Figures for the estimated number of meals provided by each London borough from 2000–01 to 2003–04 have been placed in the Library. No data is available for years prior to 2000–01.

An assessment of the effectiveness of the "Fair Access to Care Services" (FACS) initiative has not taken place. However, views on FACS were sought specifically as part of the Green Paper, "Independence, Well-being and Choice". These views are being considered as we take this forward as part of the development of the White Paper.

Medical Graduates

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what mechanisms are in place to ensure that the number of new graduates in *(a)* medicine, *(b)* nursing, *(c)* midwifery and *(d)* physiotherapy is matched by the number of junior posts. [14178]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 10 October 2005]:* The national health service has historically been funded to provide 12 per cent. more pre-registration house officer/foundation programme year one posts in England than the anticipated number of graduates from English medical schools and this is planned to continue in the future. A foundation programme workforce group, operating as part of the modernising medical careers implementation process, is overseeing the allocation of funding from the multi-professional education and training (MPET) budget that will enable the creation of the increased number of foundation programme posts required over the next few years.

In line with "Shifting the balance of power", the Government have devolved local workforce planning to strategic health authorities (SHAs). It is the responsibility of primary care trusts and SHAs to analyse their local situation and develop plans, in liaison

with their local NHS trusts and primary care providers, to ensure that the number of junior posts matches the number of newly qualified staff.

Mobile Phone Technology

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the risk of developing acoustic neuroma as a result of using digital (GSM) mobile phone technology. [17922]

Caroline Flint: Through the mobile telecommunications and health research programme (www.mthr.org.uk) the Department is contributing to the 13-nation interphone study of mobile phone use and brain tumours including acoustic neuroma. Results from three relatively small parts of this study already published suggest there is no substantial risk of acoustic neuroma in the first 10 years of use although the authors state that an increased risk after longer term use could not be ruled out. The results to date are not entirely consistent but emphasise the need for continued high quality research. We will await the conclusions of the full study due next year.

NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many new posts the purchasing hubs that are being set up by the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency will create; whether the net result of these changes and the planned reduction in the complement of procured staff will represent a saving for the NHS in terms of *(a)* personnel costs and *(b)* administration; and if she will make a statement. [16582]

Jane Kennedy: The collaborative procurement hubs are owned and governed by the trusts they serve. Three pathfinder procurement hubs are now formed and each has demonstrated through a robust business case a positive return on investment. This will result in the hubs saving at least £270 million by 2007–08.

While there have been some new appointments to the hubs, wherever possible they have utilised the capabilities of existing resources from within the trusts.

The net result is a significant saving to the national health service, which can be directed towards patient care.

NHS Security Management Service

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the work of the NHS Security Management Service. [16526]

Jane Kennedy: In December 2003 a new strategy for the management of security in the national health service was published, entitled "A Professional Approach to Managing Security in the NHS". The introduction of local security management specialists provides NHS health bodies, for the first time ever, with professional skills and expertise to tackle security-related problems such as violence against NHS staff. This is reinforced by accredited training, advice and guidance from the NHS Security Management Service (NHS SMS).

The local security management specialists' work is underpinned by two national frameworks; the first deals with tackling violence against NHS staff, replacing the "Zero Tolerance" campaign, and the second deals with general security management measures. The first framework introduced a number of measures to proactively and reactively tackle the problem of violence against staff. As a result of this new framework, it is estimated that in 2004–05, 85,000 frontline NHS staff received training in how to prevent and manage violence and the number of criminal sanctions identified involving those who have assaulted NHS staff has risen fifteen-fold; from 51 in 2002–03 to 759 in 2004–05.

NHS Staff (Bullying)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what facilities are in place within her Department to examine cases of bullying of NHS staff when a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of a trust's internal processes. [10288]

Mr. Byrne: The Department is not responsible for resolving individual disputes between a national health service trust and its employees. Guidance is provided by the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service.

Older People

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* health improvement plans and *(b)* service and financial frameworks include a programme to promote healthy ageing; and how many of these include complementary programmes to promote older people's mental health. [8018]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected by the Department. Health improvement plans, and service and financial frameworks were replaced by local delivery plans from 2003–04. Current planning requirements are set out in National Standards, Local Action, Health and Social Care Standards and Planning Framework 2005–06 to 2007–08.

Operational Responsibility

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her answer of 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, to question 11537, who is responsible for ensuring the site at Consett is operational. [17477]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* Following the review of the options appraisal paper, the County Durham and North Tees Valley Strategic Health Authority (SHA) has identified a location on the North Durham Trust's North Durham site. The Department continues to work with the SHA, which has overall responsibility locally, to ascertain when services can commence.

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her answer of 10 October 2005 to question 12199, who in the Department is responsible for ensuring that all radiologists are on the appropriate specialist register of the General Medical Council; and what sanctions the Department can impose on radiologists who are not registered. [17478]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* Alliance Medical Limited (AML) is responsible for ensuring that all radiologists employed under their contract are on the appropriate specialist register of the General Medical Council. Details of prospective employees are available to the clinical guardian of the contract and AML's head of clinical governance. Specific sanctions imposed for breach of contract are commercially confidential, but the provider could incur financial penalties.

Pay-per-view Television

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospitals operate pay-for-view television; and in how many subtitles are available. [16569]

Jane Kennedy: There are more than 155 national health service hospitals that provide an integrated pay-for-view television and telephone service to over 75,000 beds, as part of the patient power (bedside television and telephone) programme.

The majority of these televisions have the capability to provide subtitles.

Physiotherapy

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will place a copy of the Action Plan for physiotherapy graduates and the accompanying letter from Andrew Foster in the Library; [16641]

(2) whether the Action Plan for physiotherapy graduates is designed to address the difficulties faced by physiotherapy graduates seeking employment in the NHS in the *(a)* short-term and *(b)* long-term; [16642]

(3) to whom and when the Action Plan for physiotherapy graduates and the accompanying letter from Andrew Foster was distributed; [16643]

(4) what the status is of the Action Plan for physiotherapy graduates; [16644]

(5) pursuant to the answer of 5 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 59–60W, to the hon. Member for North Cornwall (Mr. Rogerson) on physiotherapists, who was responsible for compiling the action plan for physiotherapy graduates. [16695]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 10 October 2005]:* The physiotherapy workforce action plan was compiled by the national health service workforce review team, in partnership with the Department, the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) and representatives from NHS organisations. It includes short, medium and longer-term strategies that local managers can use to help new graduates to secure posts.

The NHS workforce review team issued the action plan, with the accompanying letter from Andrew Foster, on 23 May 2005. It was sent to the attendees of a physiotherapy collaborative workshop held in March 2005, which included NHS service managers, representative from higher education providers of physiotherapy training and CSP representatives. They were asked to disseminate it within their organisations. It was also issued to workforce development directors in strategic health authorities.

The Department continues to work closely with the CSP, the NHS workforce review team and NHS organisations to help junior physiotherapists to find first posts. The NHS workforce review team held a review meeting of the action plan, which had representatives from the Department, CSP and NHS commissioners on 25 July 2005. A further meeting is planned for October/November.

A copy of the action plan and letter from Andrew Foster has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what physiotherapy workforce planning has been undertaken to support the implementation of the national service framework for long-term health conditions. [14177]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 10 October 2005]:* The workforce review team issues annual guidance on workforce planning to strategic health authorities and through them to national health service trusts and primary care trusts (PCTs). The guidance takes account of the implications of national service frameworks.

NHS trusts and PCTs are then responsible for their own workforce planning taking account of national guidance and local factors.

Sign Language

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance is provided to local authority social service departments on the provision of sign language services for adults who have learning disabilities. [17805]

Mr. Byrne: The Government recognise British Sign Language (BSL) as a language in its own right.

The Department of Health does not issue guidance to local authorities on the provision of sign language for adults who have learning disabilities. However, we would expect all local authority social services departments to take the communication needs of the population into account when providing services.

The Disability Rights Commission published guidance in 2004 on how social services should comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) in relation to communicating with deaf people who use BSL, including people who have a hearing impairment who also have a learning disability.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Departmental Buildings

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total floor space is of buildings owned or leased by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies. [14533]

Mrs. McGuire: The total amount of space occupied by DWP and its agencies is 2,441,605 m^2.

The vast majority of buildings occupied by DWP have been transferred, for value, to Land Securities Trillium under the terms of the PRIME PFI contract.

Therefore DWP does not own or lease them, a unit price is paid for the provision of fully serviced accommodation.

Scottish Constituency Boundaries

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what changes have been made in the collecting of statistics to reflect changes in Scottish constituency boundaries for the Westminster Parliament. [15050]

Margaret Hodge: While no changes have been introduced in methodology, the statistical presentation has been updated to reflect new Westminster parliamentary boundaries.

DWP will continue to publish National Statistics that reflect the Westminster boundaries in existence when the information was collected. Accordingly, for data based on May 2005 and planned for publication in October 2005, the National Statistics will be based on the new Westminster constituency boundaries. DWP will also produce similar statistical information based on the current constituency boundaries for the Scottish Parliament and make these available on request.

We are developing a time series of quarterly data on benefit caseloads and new deal participants back to May 1999 based on the new Scottish constituencies for the Westminster Parliament. This data is planned to be made available in October 2005 as part of the changes to the DWP National Statistics outputs announced via a press release on 15 July 2005.

HOME DEPARTMENT

London Underground

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the implications of mobile phone use for security on the London Underground; and if he will make a statement. [15819]

Ms Buck: I have been asked to reply.

The Department keeps the transport security measures we require under constant review. This process is informed by the work of the Joint Terrorism Assessment Centre and includes consideration of terrorists' modus operandi and the practical constraints of an open, mass transit system. I understand that London Underground is considering a trial of technology to allow the use of mobile phones on stations that are underground. The Department will continue to assess whether there are any security implications.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

British Beef (Thai Ban)

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the outcome was of the Minister of State for Trade's discussions with the Thai Foreign Minister regarding the Thai ban on British beef at the EU/ASEAN meeting in Laos. [17462]

Ian Pearson: The issue of the Thai ban on beef did not feature in discussions between myself and the Thai Foreign Minister at the EU/ASEAN meeting in Laos on 28 July 2005. However, I lobbied for the lifting of the ban on British beef with the Thai Deputy Prime Minister, Dr. Surakiart Sathirathai, in Bangkok on 27 July and the then Thai Commerce Minister Dr. Thanong Bidaya, in Bangkok on 26 July 2005.

The Thai Department of Livestock Development and the Thai Food and Drug Administration are currently revising their guidelines and regulations in the light of the May 2005 revision of the World Organisation for Animal Health's (OIE) Terrestrial Animal Health Code Chapter on BSE (Article 2.3.13) which allows trade in de-boned skeleton muscle meat and blood products without regard to the exporting country's BSE status as long as certain conditions (such as cattle age and slaughter techniques) are met.

EU Directive on Services in the Internal Market

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) if he will list those public services in the UK where there is economic consideration provided by or on behalf of the recipient as defined by the EU Directive on Services in the Internal Market; [15425]

(2) which UK service sectors are *(a)* economic and *(b)* non-economic in nature as defined by the EU Directive on Services in the Internal Market. [15427]

Ian Pearson: The proposed EU directive on services in the internal market aims to cover a number of services that are provided to the public sector (for example private firms providing accountancy or IT services), and some services provided via the public sector (for example recycling services).

Where activities are performed for no remuneration by the state in fulfilment of its social, cultural, educational and legal obligations, these are not covered by the definition of services in article 50 of the treaty of Rome and therefore do not fall within the scope of the directive.

The directive only includes services which are economic in nature and are normally provided for remuneration. It does not aim to cover non-economic services.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment the UK Government have undertaken of whether UK authorisation schemes are *(a)* non-discriminatory, *(b)* based on a strong public interest and *(c)* proportionate under the terms of the EU Directive on Services in the Internal Market. [15426]

Ian Pearson: The UK Government are committed to better regulation. The proposals in the Directive are very much in line with our continuing approach in this area.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what representations he has received regarding the EU Directive on Services in the Internal Market from *(a)* business organisations, *(b)* trade unions, *(c)* other organisations and *(d)* individuals; [15428]

(2) what consultation he has carried out regarding the EU Directive on Services; and what further consultation he intends to hold. [15430]

Ian Pearson: The UK Government consulted over 2,000 organisations within the period March to June 2004. These included individual businesses, business organisations, trade unions, consumer groups, and trade bodies. A summary of the responses received is published on the DTI website (http)://www.dti.gov.uk/ewt/services_directive.htm). We continue to consult stakeholders regularly.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether it is his policy to support an exemption for the health sector from the country of origin principle in the EU directive on services in the internal market. [15429]

Ian Pearson: The UK Government's position is to seek an exclusion for all healthcare services from the country of origin principle.

Salmon

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the impact of the 16 per cent. anti-dumping duty imposed on EU imports of Norwegian farmed salmon on *(a)* salmon farmers and *(b)* salmon processors in the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement. [15767]

Ian Pearson: None. Anti-dumping duties were imposed for only a short time, from their implementation on 27 April 2005 until their replacement on 4 July 2005 by a minimum import price (MIP) set at €2.81 per kilo (whole-fish equivalent).

Service Liberalisations

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he has had with *(a)* other EU member states, *(b)* the European Commission and *(c)* the European Trade Commissioner, regarding GATS Mode 4 access to the EU by World Trade Organisation most favoured nations. [16866]

Ian Pearson: *[holding answer 10 October 2005]:* The issue of GATS Mode 4 access to the EC by WTO members was last discussed in detail in the context of the preparation of the EC revised services offer, tabled in the WTO on 2 June 2005.

In the months leading up to the tabling of the revised offer, there were extensive discussions in the article 133 committee in Brussels on the preparation of the revised offer. These discussions involved the Commission and all member states.

State Aid

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list state aid for national shipyards of each EU member state since 1997. [16845]

Ian Pearson: This information is not readily available and could not be provided without incurring disproportionate cost.

Textile Quotas (China)

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what role the Government played in the negotiation of EU bilateral textile quotas with China; how he voted on this issue in the Council of Ministers; and if he will make a statement. [16936]

Ian Pearson: The European Commission alone was responsible for negotiation of the agreement on textiles and clothing quotas with the Chinese Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM). It received political endorsement by member states in the Article 133 Textiles Committee and the necessary technical amendments to the relevant EU Regulation were agreed in the Commission-chaired Textiles Management Committee. The UK supported on both occasions.

UK Trade and Investment

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 30 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1771W, on UK Trade and Investment, what process UK Trade and Investment uses to assess whether an agent is suitable for inclusion on *(a)* an off-the-shelf and *(b)* a bespoke list. [15928]

Ian Pearson: Off-the-shelf lists are compiled from readily available sources of information about companies. Bespoke lists are those where additional checks may be made, for example to establish that the company is in business, located at the address listed, trading in the product range specified and interested in approaches from UK businesses.

While UKTI seek to ensure the suitability of companies included in such lists, as explained in the answer of 14 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 238W, the onus remains with UKTI customers to satisfy themselves as to the business standing and integrity of potential agents.

TREASURY

Civil Servants

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what civil service redundancies have been made since he announced the Efficiency Review in July 2004, broken down by Department; and what the costs of those redundancies have been in each case. [16668]

Mr. Des Browne: In Budget 2005 the Chancellor announced that Departments have delivered the first 12,500 reduction in civil service posts, towards the Government's planned gross reduction of 84,000 civil service posts by 2008. Departments will report on further progress in their Autumn Performance Reports.

Controlled Goods

Roger Berry: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many staff are employed by HM Revenue and Customs to prevent the illicit export and trans-shipment of controlled goods. [17087]

Dawn Primarolo: Precise figures are not available. HM Revenue and Customs' controls on the export of controlled goods are undertaken by front line staff who

are multi-functional and are deployed flexibly on the basis of risk assessment and intelligence gathering. They are supported by two central investigation and intelligence teams who provide intelligence to inform computerised profiling, and targeting, and who conduct criminal investigations where appropriate. This deployment allows HMRC to look into all significant allegations and intelligence in relation to breaches of export controls.

Golden Rule

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will define the golden rule; and what recent changes have been made in how it is calculated. [18456]

Mr. Des Browne: The golden rule states that over the economic cycle, the Government will borrow only to invest and not to fund current spending. Progress against the golden rule is measured by the average surplus on the current budget expressed as a ratio to GDP over the economic cycle. No changes have been made to the way the golden rule is defined since the new framework was introduced in 1997.

London Bombings

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the impact on the economy of the bombings on 7 and 21 July 2005, with particular reference to London; and if he will make a statement. [16885]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer the Financial Secretary gave her on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 273W.

Olympic Games

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the economic benefits that the 2012 Olympics will bring to the economy of *(a)* London and *(b)* the UK; and if he will make a statement. [15570]

Tessa Jowell: I have been asked to reply.

We have commissioned a study to assess the impact of the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012 on London and the UK, which we will publish in due course. We are determined to maximise the opportunities that hosting the Games affords. Through the 2012 Nations and Regions Group we will work with regional development agencies and other key regional bodies to develop plans and strategies in order to realise those benefits.

Mobile Phones

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of people in London who had a mobile phone in each year since 1997. [16910]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Sarah Teather, dated 14 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question regarding information on mobile phone ownership in London since 1997. (16910)

Data for household ownership of mobile phones are presented in the table. Figures for individual ownership of mobile phones are not available from National Statistics.

Table 1 shows the number of London households in which one or more household members owned at least one mobile phone between 1997–98 and 200304, the most recently available figure. Table 2, shows the proportion of households in London with at least one mobile phone over the same time frame.

Table 1: Number of households with at least one mobile telephone 1997–98 to 2003–04

Thousand

London	
1997–98	791
1998–99	1,060
1999–2000	1,655
[1]2001–02	1,775
2002–03	1,928
2003–04	2,242

[1] A figure for 2000–01 has been omitted because of concerns that it may not provide an accurate estimate of mobile phone ownership.
Source:
Family Expenditure Survey end Expenditure and Food Survey, Office for National Statistics.

Table 2: Percentage of households with at least one mobile telephone, 1997–98 to 2003–04

Percentage

London	
1997–88	27
1998–99	35
1999–2000	53
[1]2001–02	62
2002–03	68
2003–04	78

[1] A figure for 2000–01 has been omitted because of concerns that it may not provide an accurate estimate of mobile phone ownership.
Source:
Family Expenditure and Food Survey, Office for National Statistics.

Like all estimates from sample surveys the figures presented are subject to sampling variability. This is greater for sub-groups of the population than for national estimates.

NHS Bank

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans his Department has to provide additional funding to the NHS Bank. [17967]

Mr. Des Browne: The NHS Bank is funded by the Department of Health and any changes to its funding would be an internal matter for the Department.

Nuclear Power

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps his Department has taken to establish the full economic life cycle costs of nuclear fission; and if he will make a statement. [17283]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* I have been asked to reply.

The Department has undertaken no research to establish the full economic life cycle costs of nuclear fission.

Public Service Agreement Targets

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when his Department plans to publish a comprehensive assessment of the performance of Government Departments with regard to Public Service Agreement targets set as part of the 2002 Spending Review. [17966]

Mr. Des Browne: Progress against PSA targets is regularly reported by Departments in their departmental reports and autumn performance reports.

Smoking Ban

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the likely change in tax revenues which would result from a ban on smoking in public places; and if he will make a statement. [17752]

Mr. Des Browne: The Government takes all factors into account when forecasting tax revenues, including changes in consumption resulting from Government measures to reduce smoking prevalence. However, it is not possible to isolate the particular effect of any one of these measures.

Stamp Duty Land Tax

Mr. Francois: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what changes are proposed for the operation of stamp duty land tax; whether these changes include *(a)* electronic scanning of returns, *(b)* issuing of requisitions and *(c)* charging of interest; and if he will make a statement; [17803]

(2) how many stamp duty land duty tax returns to Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs resulted in the issuing of requisitions in the last year for which figures are available; and what percentage of the overall number of returns this figure represents. [17804]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: From 1 October 2004 to 30 September 2005, a total of 974,012 stamp duty land tax (SDLT) returns were processed electronically. Of these, 251,805 resulted in the issue of form SDLT8 (request for further information relating to incomplete or incorrectly completed returns). This represents 25.85 per cent. of the returns processed electronically. Since 26 August 2005 the percentage of cases where SDLT's are issued has continued to fall to approximately 15 per cent. HMRC will continue to work to reduce the incidents. It has also been possible to file SDLT returns on-line directly into the SDLT automated system. Using this service removes the need to use post, and (because of the in-built checks) has a very high probability of returns being complete and correct first time. HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) is working with representative bodies to encourage the use of the service.

A recent review by HMRC of SDLT legislation revealed that the statutory provisions for charging interest on SDLT were incomplete and that HMRC had been collecting and paying interest in error for a period since 1 December 2003. As soon as HMRC became aware of this problem all interest charges were suspended, as were the reminders for interest outstanding. Any interest already paid is being refunded. HMRC will be contacting each purchaser affected, and their agent, where applicable, as soon as possible to repay the interest paid. Further information is available on the HMRC website at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/so/sdlt_interest_qa.htm. The appropriate legislation has now been introduced and interest on late payments of SDLT is chargeable from 26 September 2005.

Teenage Pregnancies

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many teenage pregnancies there were in each of the last 10 years, broken down by local authority. [16958]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Lynne Featherstone, dated 14 October 2005:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many teenage pregnancies there were in each of the last 10 years, broken down by local authority. (16958)

The most recent year for which conception statistics are available is 2003. I am placing a table in the House of Commons Library which gives the number of teenage conceptions by area of usual residence in England and Wales for 1994–2003.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Bulgaria (EU Accession)

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will raise the issue of performing bears in Bulgaria with the Government before any decision by the Government to agree to the accession of Bulgaria to the European Union. [17094]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Bulgaria already has legislation which outlaws bear dancing, but it may take time to eliminate the practice entirely. This is a matter for the Bulgarian Government. It is not a condition for EU accession.

Canada (Anniversary)

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if his Department will commemorate the 250th anniversary of the conquest of Canada. [17081]

Ian Pearson: We are in contact with the relevant federal and provincial authorities about the 250th anniversary of the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in 2009. These discussions are still at an early stage.

Dorte Schmidt-Brown Case

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) if he will make a

statement on his policy towards reform of the EU authorities, with particular reference to the Dorte Schmidt-Brown case; [16090]

(2) if he will make a statement on the status of *(a)* investigations and *(b)* rulings in the Dorte Schmidt-Brown case. [16091]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: It is important that appropriate procedures exist to oblige officials to report serious wrongdoing and to enjoy protection if they do so in good faith. The United Kingdom supported the introduction of the "Whistleblowers' Charter" and pressed strongly for these procedures to be included in the revised Staff Regulation, which came into force in May 2004. This charter, and the rules now in force, obliges the staff of the EU institutions to raise any concerns they have with regard to serious wrongdoing with either the Director-General of their institution, the Secretary-General, "persons in equivalent positions", or the independent European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF).

Dorte Schmidt-Brown made allegations of wrongdoing against senior managers at the European Union's statistical body, Eurostat. Disciplinary procedures were opened immediately against the senior managers allegedly involved, and their cases are now in the hands of French prosecutors who will hold them to account if the outcome of their investigations confirms that serious wrongdoing has taken place. It is clear the irregular financial practices in existence at Eurostat in the late 1990s left the EU's resources vulnerable to fraud. But thanks to the new systems put in place, these practices have been discovered and the financial management improved.

Ms Schmidt-Brown raised a libel action (against a UK company "Eurogramme", that she alleges was improperly awarded Eurostat contacts) before the High Court of England and Wales, seeking damages for defamation she claimed to have suffered through statements made by the company. That case was settled out of court.

In December 2002, Ms Schmidt-Brown asked the Court of First instance to order the Commission to pay the costs of her libel case in the High Court (€75,000), claiming that they, as her employer, had a duty themselves to take the steps necessary to protect her reputation. On 5 July 2005, the Court ruled against Ms Schmidt-Brown. It would not be appropriate for us to comment on this judgment by the Court.

Further information can be found in OLAF's annual activities report which is available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/anti_fraud/index_en.html for more information on the progress of EU activity in this area. The report provides information on the different sources of information it receives which lead to investigations, including whistleblowers.

Eritrea

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the Eritrean Government on recent arrests in the Zoba Debub region. [15547]

Ian Pearson: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) make representations to the Eritrean Government on human rights issues at every suitable opportunity. The Government expressed our concern on the issue of arrests and detention without trial to the Eritrean ambassador on 28 July and we have since pressed him at senior official level. Our ambassador in Asmara also regularly raises these issues with the Eritrean Government, both bilaterally and with our EU colleagues. The Government will continue to press the Entreans to improve human rights, including in its role of EU presidency.

EU/Council of Europe (Overlap)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what institutional arrangements he is proposing to minimise the overlap in functions between the EU and the Council of Europe. [17312]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Following decisions made at the Council of Europe's third summit, held in Warsaw in May, the UK, as EU presidency, has initiated a memorandum of understanding between the Council of Europe (CoE) and the EU. Work is now under way.

This memorandum of understanding intends to create a new framework of enhanced co-operation between the two organisations, building on their respective competence and expertise. The idea is to ensure that both the CoE and the EU complement each other rather than duplicate their functions.

European Constitution

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list preparatory work undertaken by the Commission in anticipation of the ratification of the EU constitution since the start of the UK presidency. [15735]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: No formal or informal legislative proposals or other initiatives have been proposed by the European Commission, which rely on the constitutional treaty as their legal basis.

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list elements contained in the EU Constitution that have been proposed separately as EU legislation since 1 June; and if he will make a statement on his policy regarding the implementation of separate elements of the Constitution. [16713]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: No legislation which relies on the EU Constitutional Treaty for its legal base has been proposed.

The hon. Member will be aware that, following the June European Council, the future of the Constitutional Treaty is uncertain. Until there is clarity on the way forward on ratification, it would be premature to talk about the implications of detailed provisions.

European Institutions

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps have been taken by the institutions of the EU towards

creating *(a)* a European Armaments Agency, *(b)* an EU President, *(c)* an EU Foreign Minister, *(d)* an EU External Action Service, *(e)* an EU Fundamental Rights Agency, *(f)* a European Police College, *(g)* a European Public Prosecutor, *(h)* an EU standing committee on internal security and *(i)* a European Space Agency; under what legal authority these steps have been taken; and what further steps could be taken without the coming into force of the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe. [15475]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: No formal or informal legislative proposals or other initiatives have been proposed by the institutions of the EU which rely on the Constitutional Treaty as their legal basis.

The European Defence Agency has already been established following a unanimous decision by Heads of State and Government in June 2004. The Government agreed with this decision as the European Defence Agency could be established under Article 14 Treaty European Union (TEU) and the Government believes that the Agency will make a real contribution to enhancing the effectiveness of EU member states' military capabilities.

No steps have been taken by the institutions of the EU towards the creation of a President of the European Council or the creation of an EU Foreign Minister, as envisaged in the Constitutional Treaty in Article 1–22 and Article 1–28.

The Luxembourg presidency took forward preparatory work on the European External Action Service as tasked by the 2004 October Intergovernmental conference and 2004 December European Council. This work has not pre-empted ratification: it has consisted of discussion and exchange of ideas in Brussels. No formal decisions have been taken as part of this preparatory work.

The Council decision to convert the existing EU Monitoring Centre for Racism and Xenophobia into a Fundamental Rights Agency was taken nearly two years ago. The Commission published a draft Regulation and Council Decision on the establishment of a Fundamental Rights Agency on 30 June. The Commission proposes that the legal base for the Agency be Article 308 Treaty Establishing the European Community (TEC), and the legal base for the Council Decision Articles 30, 31 and 34(2)*(c)* TEU.

The European Police College (CEPOL) was established by Council Decision 2000/820/JHA of 22 December 2000. Articles 30(1) *(c)* and 34(2) *(c)* TEU provide the legal basis for a European Police College. In December 2003 the European Council decided that the seat of CEPOL should be in the United Kingdom and subsequently that the CEPOL Secretariat should be based in Bramshill. The European Police College was established as a European Body by Council Decision 10040/05 of 13 July 2005.

No steps have been taken towards the creation of a European Public Prosecutor and there is no legal base in the current treaties for the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor envisaged by the Constitutional Treaty in Article HI-274.

Preliminary discussions of the role and composition of the internal security committee envisaged by the Constitutional Treaty took place under the Luxembourg presidency of the EU in the first half of 2005. No formal steps have been taken by the EU institutions towards creating such a committee.

The European Space Agency was set up in 1975 by both European Union and non European Union countries. It is an inter-governmental body established by Convention that does not form a part of the European Union although it maintains close ties with it.

Hizb ut-Tahrir

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the activities of Hizb ut-Tahrir; and if he will make a statement. [16698]

Dr. Howells: Hizb ut-Tahrir are active in several countries. Their stated goal is the restoration of an Islamic Caliphate. Hizb ut-Tahrir are an intolerant organisation. They have denounced democracy and express extremist, anti-Semitic and homophobic views.

Human Rights Judgments

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what sanctions can be employed to ensure member states of the Council of Europe implement the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights. [17314]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There are several courses of action available to the Council of Europe.

The Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers can adopt interim resolutions expressing concern with respect to the slow or non-execution of a judgment. Peer pressure is increased to encourage rapid compliance with the court's judgment. In the vast majority of cases, this is sufficient to ensure compliance.

At the request of the Committee of Ministers, the Chairman in Office can write to or hold meetings with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the respondent state.

The ultimate measure available to the Committee of Ministers is recourse to article 8 of the Council of Europe's statute: suspension of voting rights in the Committee of Ministers, or even expulsion from the organisation. But this is an extreme measure, which would prove counter-productive in most cases.

In order to strengthen the measures available, protocol 14 to the European Convention on Human Rights empowers the Committee of Ministers to bring infringement proceedings in the European Court of Human Rights against a state that refuses to abide by a judgment. We are urging all member states of the Council of Europe to ratify the protocol as soon as possible, as the UK has done, so that it can enter into force.

Iran

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials have had with representatives of the

Iranian Government with regard to the supply of military equipment to Shia militias operating in southern Iraq. [17156]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary discussed our concerns with Iran's new Foreign Minister, Manuchehr Mottaki, when they met on 17 September. Senior officials have done so with the Iranian authorities on many occasions, most recently on 10 October. To date, Iran's response has been wholly unsatisfactory.

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the number of Iranian Kurds killed or wounded in Iran following the shooting of Shivan Qaderi; and if he will make a statement. [17570]

Dr. Howells: The shooting of Showan Ghaderi (Shivan Qaderi) by Iranian security forces in July prompted violent unrest in Kurdish areas of Iran. We estimate over 20 people died in clashes between the security forces and protestors. As Presidency of the EU, we demarched the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 22 August to express our concern at the excessive response by the Iranian authorities, the reports of arrests and harassment of journalists and the closure of two newspapers for their coverage of the protests. We continue to monitor the situation faced by Iran's ethnic minorities carefully.

Iraq (Anthrax Exports)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has with the United States Administration on exports of anthrax to Iraq from the United States prior to the War; and if he will make a statement. [17457]

Dr. Howells: A great deal of debate was generated in both Houses of Parliament, when interest in this issue first arose in December 2003. We consulted the United States embassy in London, who noted that the export of anthrax from the United States to Iraq in the 1980's was subject to scrutiny by the relevant US authority. Export licenses were granted for the transfers in accordance with controls in place at the time.

The quantities exported were consistent with the requirements of legitimate scientific research and the United States authorities judged that there was no reason to suppose that the materials would be used for anything other than legitimate scientific purposes, namely the manufacture of vaccines. Anthrax, in particular, is endemic in Iraq.

Israel

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what the Government's policy is on the legality of Israeli settlements in territories occupied since 1967; and whether that position has changed since May; [17483]

(2) what the Government's position is on the continued building of Israeli settlements in territories occupied since 1967, where such building takes place within areas already occupied by settlements; and whether that position has changed since May. [17926]

Dr. Howells: We have not changed our policy on Israeli settlements. Settlements are illegal under international law and settlement construction is an obstacle to peace. The roadmap is clear that Israel should freeze all settlement construction including the "natural growth" of existing settlements, and dismantle all outposts built since 2001. We call on the Israeli Government to do so.

Sudan

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress the International Criminal Court is making with its investigations in Darfur. [17489]

Dr. Howells: Under the terms of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1593 the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) must report to the Security Council every six months. He presented his first report to the Security Council on 29 June and said that, following a preliminary examination, he had determined there were sufficient grounds to open a formal investigation into the situation in Darfur.

The court will carry out its investigations into Darfur in an entirely independent capacity. The timing of the indictments, including the names and numbers of those to be investigated or prosecuted, is solely within the prosecutor's discretion. The chief prosecutor is due to update the Security Council on the status of the investigation in December, The United Kingdom is fully committed to supporting the ICC and stands ready to consider any request for assistance made by the Court.

The Hague Programme

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of item 1.3 of the Council and Commission action plan implementing The Hague Programme on strengthening freedom, security and justice in the European Union (Council Document 9778/2/05 REV 2). [15390]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Item 1.3 of the action plan reads

> "Proposal on means to enable the European Court of Justice to handle requests for preliminary rulings concerning the area of freedom, security and justice (2006)."

This reflects the Council's concern, highlighted in The Hague Programme, to consider whether there is a need to amend the Court's statute to update existing arrangements for expedition in appropriate cases. As the action plan makes clear, any such changes could only be achieved in a way that was consistent with the existing treaties.

Visas

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proportion of visa applications for *(a)* visitors, *(b)* students and *(c)* settlement were granted in 2004–05, broken down by country of application. [15579]

Dr. Howells: Entry clearance statistics for 2004–05, which includes statistics on the proportion of visa applications granted for visitors, students and

settlement, are currently being collated and checked by UKvisas and will be publicly available on the UK visas' website at www.ukvisas.gov.uk by 21 October. UKvisas will send the hon. Member a copy of the statistics if they become available before that time.

West Papua

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of recent Indonesian troop movements and military deployment in West Papua. [17240]

Ian Pearson: We are aware of recent reports of large numbers of troop movements into Papua However, the figures in these reports are unconfirmed. In March 2005, the Indonesian Army announced plans to increase the number of troops permanently based in Papua. If these plans are carried out as described, the troop strength in Papua will be approximately 13,000 within five to 10 years.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Academic Selection

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the Department of Education and Skills' policy that where selection exists, the Government believes in local decision-making, will be implemented in Northern Ireland; and what plans he has to provide for local decision-making on the continuation of academic selection in schools in Northern Ireland. [17677]

Angela E. Smith: Following a lengthy and detailed review, Government policy is to end academic selection in Northern Ireland. There are no plans to hold local ballots about ending academic selection in individual schools.

Assets Recovery Agency

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been seized by the Assets Recovery Agency in Northern Ireland since its inception; and how this money has been spent. [17034]

Mr. Woodward: Since its inception in February 2003, ARA has taken action to freeze assets in Northern Ireland in respect of 16 cases. Of those, two cases have concluded either by way of settlement or through action in the High Court. As a result houses, cars and other property to the value of £1,485,000 have been handed over to the agency for disposal. In addition, the agency has also used its taxation powers in two cases and has recovered £277,298.00 in tax.

One further case has also been settled whereby assets in excess of £100,000 have, by agreement been placed in the hands of a trustee.

The proceeds of all assets recovered under the Proceeds of Crime Act and earlier legislation are paid to the consolidated fund and an element is dispersed for a variety of asset recovery purposes under the auspices of the Home Office. Resources from that fund have been made available to the Police Service Northern Ireland to fund the appointment of financial investigators.

Cardiomyopathy

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assistance is provided to cardiomyopathy sufferers in Northern Ireland. [18043]

Mr. Woodward: Patients with cardiomyopathy are usually referred to a consultant cardiologist, a number of whom have a specialist interest in cardiomyopathy.

In addition, a consultant cardiologist at the Royal Group of Hospitals, who has a special expertise in the management of patients with genetically inherited heart disease, including cardiomyopathy, provides subspecialist service in this area. This service is provided in conjunction with consultants in clinical genetics at the Regional Genetics Centre, Belfast City Hospital. In addition to clinical tests and treatment, counselling, advice, information and psychological support services are provided for children and adults who suffer from familial cardiomyopathy.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate the number of cardiomyopathy sufferers in Northern Ireland. [18044]

Mr. Woodward: An estimate of the number of cardiomyopathy sufferers in Northern Ireland is not available. Information is available on the number of cardiomyopathy sufferers admitted as in-patients to hospitals in Northern Ireland. The number of admissions to hospital with a primary or secondary diagnosis of cardiomyopathy is detailed in the table for each of the last five years available. It should be noted that any individual could have been admitted to hospital more than once over the course of a year or over a number of years and would therefore be counted more than once in the table.

	Admissions for cardiomyopathy
2004–05	593
2003–04	628
2002–03	561
2001–02	552
2000–01	501

Source:
Hospital Inpatients System DHSS&PS

Consultant Contracts

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the funding of the new consultant contract in Northern Ireland. [17131]

Mr. Woodward: In 2004–05 my Department invested an additional £21 million in the consultant work force through implementation of the new consultant contract in Northern Ireland. This investment has been increased to £23 million in the current year.

Family/Childcare Services

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the funding arrangements for family and childcare services in Northern Ireland are. [18096]

Mr. Woodward: Funding for family and childcare services is the responsibility of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Department of Employment and Learning.

DHSSPS provides monies for various services including SureStart, Children with Complex Needs, Maternity Services, Children's Residential Care, Foster Care, Children Leaving Care, Child Protection and Family Support Services.

The Department for Employment and Learning does not fund directly Family and Childcare services. However, DEL administered PEACE II funding allocated to Training for Women Network and Playboard to support projects giving parents the opportunity to seek or remain in employment. Recently a PEACE II extension was announced and will continue to 2008 the funding has yet to be split between TWN and Playboard. In addition eligible participants on the new deal, jobskills and training for work programmes may avail of assistance with childcare costs, as may students attending further and higher education establishments.

Hepatitis

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many cases of hepatitis have been reported in Northern Ireland in each month of each of the last three years. [17118]

Mr. Woodward: The number of laboratory reports of hepatitis (A, B and C) in Northern Ireland in each month of each of the last three years is presented in the following table:

Number of laboratory reports of hepatitis (A, B and C)

	Year		
Month	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
January	6	21	21
February	7	18	11
March	17	20	17
April	15	18	19
May	13	9	20
June	6	12	20
July	15	14	[1]8
August	20	9	[1]10
September	16	8	[1]2
October	16	13	[2]—
November	11	4	[2]—
December	6	4	[2]—

[1] Hepatitis C is reported quarterly. Data for July, August and September 2005 are not yet available.
[2] Not yet available.
Notes:
1. Laboratory reporting is the mainstay of surveillance of hepatitis A, B and C in Northern Ireland. This is a voluntary process.
2. Laboratory reports of hepatitis A, B and C contain both acute and chronic infections.
3. Hepatitis A infection occurs predominantly in children. It is usually asymptomatic and so will not be tested for.
Source:
Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre NI

ILEX Company

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total amounts payable from the public purse to the ILEX Company in Londonderry have been since its inception, broken down by *(a)* salaries, *(b)* expenses, *(c)* office accommodation and *(d)* any other expenditure in excess of £1,000. [18095]

Mr. Hanson: The information is as follows:

	£
Total amounts received from Public Purse	2,588,720
Total Salary Costs	(472,810)
Total Office Accommodation	(145,018)
Direct Expenses	
Project Costs	(1,291,174)
Procurement	(50,167)
Consultancy	(43,366)
Advertising and marketing	(53,934)
Public Relations	(40,631)
Conferences	(2,196)
Total Direct Expenses	(1,481,468)
Other Expenses	
Fixed Assets	(113,925)
Board Fees and Expenses	(106,926)
Recruitment Costs	(105,210)
System Costs	(35,092)
Graphic Design	(26,379)
Audit and Accountancy	(23,886)
Legal and Professional Fees	(22,685)
Telephone	(15,810)
Postage and Stationery	(15,735)
Travel and Subsistence	(10,840)
General Expenses	(6,217)
Insurance	(2,775)
Training and Development	(2,488)
Motor running expenses	(1,568)
Total Other Expenses	(489,536)
Total	(106,926)

Note:
There is a deficit for the period of £112, recoverable in the next period

Laser Eye Surgery

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are taken *(a)* to monitor and *(b)* to regulate laser eye surgery in the Province. [17538]

Mr. Woodward: It is assumed this question relates to laser eye surgery for the correction of conditions such as short and long-sightedness. As Health and Social Service Boards do not commission laser eye surgery for this purpose, no monitoring takes place within the HPSS.

Laser eye surgery providers in the independent sector are required to be registered with the Health and Personal Social Services Regulation and Improvement Authority and are subject to inspection under the Independent Health Care Regulations (NI) 2005.

Northern Ireland Police Fund

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what disciplinary action has been taken against the two senior officials suspended by the Northern Ireland Police Fund; and if he will make a statement. [17676]

Mr. Woodward: I have been informed by the Northern Ireland Police Fund that it completed a disciplinary investigation in respect of one official of the Fund and at a subsequent hearing, dismissed the employee for gross misconduct. The second employee has resigned from the Fund.

Particulate Matter (Deaths)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in how many deaths in the Province particulate matter (PM10) was *(a)* a cause and *(b)* a contributory factor in each of the last five years. [17536]

Angela E. Smith: It is difficult to separate the effects of individual pollutants. Particulate matter is thought to worsen the condition of those who are already ill rather than being an absolute cause of death. Therefore deaths caused by particulate matter alone cannot be solely calculated. The Committee of Medical Effects of Air Pollutants (COMEAP) have however developed a methodology based on a dose response relationship that allows estimates to be made of deaths brought forward affected by particulate matter PM10 and the calculations for Northern Ireland would suggest that deaths brought forward due to particulate matter PM10 were: 177 in 2001, 157 in 2002, 180 in 2003, and 147 in 2004. Calculations carried out by the Government consultants for 2005 have not yet been completed.

Police Recruitment

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the numbers and percentages are of the total of Protestants, Roman Catholics and those who are not identified as from either religious background who *(a)* applied for positions, *(b)* were regarded as suitably qualified for and *(c)* appointed as police officers in Northern Ireland under the 50/50 recruitment policy. [18094]

Mr. Woodward: I am advised that, as at 12 October 2005, the information requested is as follows:

(a) Applications received

	Number	*Percentage*
Protestants	27,363	62.7
Roman Catholics	15,417	35.3
Other	872	2
Total	43,652	—

(b) Regarded as suitably qualified

	Number	*Percentage*
Protestants	4,413	73.1
Roman Catholics	1,568	26
Other	53	0.9
Total	6,034	—

(c) Appointed as Police Trainees

	Number	*Percentage*
Protestants	[1]972	49.1
Roman Catholics	[1]991	50.1
Other	[1]17	0.8
Total	1,980	—

[1] The appointment process is ongoing and these figures are subject to change.

With the large number of applications to join the Police Service, the number of qualified candidates is far in excess of the finite number of posts available. This means that qualified candidates of all religious traditions will sadly experience the disappointment of an unsuccessful application.

There are in addition, some candidates who lose out as a result of the implementation of the 50/50 recruitment policy, which seeks to rectify an acute historical imbalance in the composition of the police service.

The proportion of officers in the Regulars from a Catholic community background has risen from 8.3 per cent. to 18.69 per cent. This would not have been achieved without these arrangements in place.

I think the members of all Political Parties should welcome the fact that increasing numbers of our young people, from both traditions, wish to join the PSNI. This reflects their ever growing reputation.

Restorative Justice

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the Government's policy on the funding of community restorative justice projects in Northern Ireland. [18160]

Mr. Hanson: It is open to community restorative justice projects to seek funding from whatever sources may be available to support their community-based programmes and to satisfy the relevant grant criteria.

The Criminal Justice Review acknowledged that, subject to conditional safeguards, such schemes could also have a role to play in dealing with the types of low level crime which commonly concern local communities. My officials have therefore been working with the key criminal justice agencies and the representatives of the community restorative justice schemes on the development of guidelines to support the management of appropriate referrals from the statutory agencies for a community restorative solution. Once these guidelines have been agreed it is proposed to establish a pilot scheme to test the mechanisms in a practical environment.

Sexual Health Clinics

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people aged 16 and under have attended sexual health clinics in the Province in each of the last five years. [17544]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the total number of attendances at sexual health clinics is not collected centrally according to age and gender. Information is, however, available on the number of initial contacts with genito-urinary medicine clinics each year, broken down by age and gender, in respect of persons with various sexually transmitted infections. This

information is shown for the financial years ending March 2001, March 2002, March 2003, March 2004 and March 2005 in the following tables.

Initial contacts	*Under 15*	*15*	*16–19*	*Total*
1 April 2000–31 March 2001				
Male	5	2	219	226
Female	8	15	475	498
Total	13	17	694	724
1 April 2001–31 March 2002				
Male	1	0	201	202
Female	6	15	440	461
Total	7	15	641	663
1 April 2002–31 March 2003				
Male	3	3	195	201
Female	6	21	464	491
Total	9	24	659	692
1 April 2003–31 March 2004				
Male	3	3	303	309
Female	16	21	668	705
Total	19	24	971	1,014
1 April 2004–31 March 2005				
Male	1	19	397	417
Female	22	81	801	904
Total	23	100	1,198	1,321

Note:
Data used to derive these figures comprise new episodes of primary and secondary infectious syphilis, uncomplicated gonorrhoea, uncomplicated chlamydia, anogenital herpes simplex (first attack) and anogenital warts (first attack). In addition, these figures include the numbers of HIV antibody tests conducted.
Source:
Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre NI

Used Tyres (Disposal)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken to encourage the appropriate disposal of used tyres in the Province. [17537]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of the Environment, through the Environment and Heritage Service (EHS) has responsibility for enforcing a number of waste management regulations. These regulations place a legal responsibility on waste tyre producers to ensure that they transport and dispose of their tyres legally. EHS has provided advice and guidance for tyre producers and the public with regard to the safe disposal of tyres. EHS has met with companies and tyre associations to promote awareness and encourage them and their members to apply appropriate disposal routes for waste tyres. EHS is in regular contact with the vehicle dismantling sector to explain the need to comply with the higher environmental standards and advise them of the requirement to remove and safely dispose of waste tyres.

Victims Commissioner

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what resources will be made available to assist the new victims commissioner in Northern Ireland. [17673]

Angela E. Smith: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has indicated that he intends to appoint a victims' and survivors' commissioner for Northern Ireland.

Sufficient resources will be made available to enable the commissioner to carry out the duties of the office.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 17 October 2005

CABINET OFFICE

European Contractors

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list the contractors based in other EU member states that are providing services to his Department. [15444]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not collected.

Advisory Committee on Business Appointments

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list senior civil servants whose move to the private sector was vetted by the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005; to which company each moved; and what conditions were attached in each case. [16930]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested, up to 31 March 2005, is available from the annual reports of the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments, copies of which are in the Library.

I understand that, since 1 April 2005, the Advisory Committee has considered the following appointments:

Name, former Department and date of leaving service	*Appointment*	*Advice*
D. Anderson, Department for Work and Pensions, Chief Executive, Jobcentre Plus, May 2005	Chief Executive, Co-operative Financial Services Ltd.	Unconditional approval
Sir Roger Bone KCMG, FCO, HM Ambassador to Brazil, July 2004	President, Boeing UK	Unconditional approval
Ms A. Grant, FCO, High Commissioner South Africa, May 2005	Special Adviser, Standard Chartered Bank	Approved subject to the condition that, for six months from her last day in post, she should not revisit South Africa for business purposes, advise on it, or have dealings with companies there
S. Haddrill, DTI, Director General Fair Markets, April 2005	Director General, Association of British Insurers	Approved subject to the condition that, for six months from his last day of service, he should not be personally involved in lobbying Government Ministers or officials
A Laurance, Department of Health Adviser to Minister of Health, Iraq, June 2005	Team Leader, Emergency Public Administration Reform Programme, Iraq, Adam Smith International Ltd.	Unconditional approval
Sir Roderic Lyne KBE CMG, FCO, HM Ambassador to Moscow, August 2004	Adviser, ITE Group plc	Unconditional approval
J. Spencer CB, Department for Constitutional Affairs, Director General, Clients and Policy, February 2005	Consultant, Cap Gemini UK plc	Unconditional approval
Sir John Vickers, Office of Fair Trading, Chairman, September 2005	Drummond Professor of Political Economy, Oxford University	Unconditional approval

Hampton Review

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make a statement on progress towards amalgamating 31 inspection agencies, consequent upon the recommendations of the Hampton Review; and what assessment he has made of the *(a)* management and *(b)* financial implications of these amalgamations. [16970]

Mr. Hutton: The mergers recommended in the Hampton report are being taken forward by the relevant Departments, who are themselves considering the financial and management arrangements.

Work is well under way on the programme of mergers, and is on track to meet Philip Hampton's target of April 2009 for completion. For example:

The Department of Trade and Industry have finished a consultation on their proposals for the Consumer and Trading Standards Agency.

The Natural England and Rural Communities Bill has been brought before the House, containing provisions to create one of the Hampton thematic regulators, Natural England.

In addition, the Cabinet Office has just finished consulting on the proposals contained in "A Bill for Better Regulation", which proposes a power to enable regulatory structural reform to take place quickly, with proper scrutiny but without disproportionate use of parliamentary time.

Recycled Tyres

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what percentage of the tyres from

the Government car service were recycled in the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [16957]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The responsibility for the provision of ministerial cars and drivers has been delegated under the terms of the Framework Document to the Government Car Despatch Agency. I have asked its Chief Executive, Mr. Roy Burke, to write to the hon. Member. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library.

Volunteering

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many volunteering positions his Department has offered in each of the last five years. [17866]

Mr. Hutton: All staff are offered the opportunity to use one day's paid special leave per year to undertake a volunteering activity. While the Cabinet Office does not offer specific positions for which the volunteering leave has to be used, the Department has helped facilitate activities, currently doing so through a joint Community Service Volunteers (CSV) and Home Office initiative.

To date in 2005, 14 teams of between 10 and 20 staff have undertaken or are preparing for team volunteering events organised by CSV. In addition, 15 staff have volunteered via a CSV scheme to be mentors to schoolchildren in local schools, and other staff continue to undertake individual volunteering positions such as school governorships, charity fundraising, assisting the St. John's Ambulance, and participating in faith based activities. We survey staff annually to assess the level of volunteering activity.

Wyre Estuary (Gas Storage)

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what discussions the Duchy has had with *(a)* Canatxx UK Ltd. and *(b)* associate companies regarding the granting of mineral working rights for gas storage under the Wyre Estuary. [17837]

Mr. Hutton: The Duchy Office has had a couple of preliminary meetings with Canatxx UK Ltd. to hear about their proposals, but is awaiting the outcome of the planning process before holding any further more substantive discussions.

There have been no meetings with associated companies regarding the working of minerals beneath the Wyre Estuary.

DEFENCE

Future Rapid Effect System

12. **Mr. Harper:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he last discussed the future rapid effect system with the chief of defence procurement. [17621]

Mr. Ingram: Defence Ministers meet regularly with the Chief of Defence Procurement to discuss procurement issues.

Submarines

13. **Mr. Gordon Prentice:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the running costs of the Trident submarine fleet were in 2004–05. [17622]

John Reid: Since the Trident nuclear deterrent became operational in 1994, the annual expenditure for capital and running costs has ranged between 2 and 4 per cent. of the annual defence budget.

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many submarines are in service in the Royal Navy; and how many there were in each of the last five years. [18219]

Mr. Ingram: The Royal Navy has 15 submarines in service, four SSBNs (Trident) and 11 SSNs (hunter killer). The number of submarines in service in each of the last five years is set out in the following table.

Submarines in service

	SSBNs	*SSNs*	*Total*
2000	4	12	16
2001	4	12	16
2002	4	12	16
2003	4	12	16
2004	4	11	15

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials have had with the US Administration regarding (i) an extension to the service life of US Ohio-class submarines and (ii) a replacement for US Ohio-class submarines; and if he will make a statement. [17157]

Mr. Ingram: I have been made aware of extensions to the service life of US Ohio-class submarines as part of routine discussions on matters of common interest. I cannot comment on US plans regarding a replacement for the Ohio-class submarines; that is a matter for the US Government.

Royal Air Force

14. **Mrs. Dorries:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he last discussed the state of the RAF with the Chief of Air Staff. [17623]

Mr. Ingram: As the Secretary of State's principal adviser on Royal Air Force issues the Chief of the Air Staff has direct access to Defence Ministers whenever he requires and Defence Ministers regularly meet him in a variety of forums.

21.Mark Pritchard: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will take steps to ensure that the pensions of employees at RAF Cosford are protected as part of the defence training review. [17630]

Mr. Touhig: In order to be awarded the Defence Training Review contract, the winning Bidder must provide a pension scheme with broadly comparable benefits to existing pensions available to employees at RAF Cosford.

The Bidder's pension scheme will be assessed by the Government Actuary's Department to ensure that these conditions are met.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the number of *(a)* families and *(b)* organisations with an interest in RAF Innsworth under the Crichel Down Rules relating to compulsory purchase; and if he will make a statement. [18490]

Mr. Touhig: The RAF Innsworth site has not been declared surplus to MOD requirements. For that reason, it would be premature and entail possibly unnecessary costs to embark on any detailed Crichel Down investigations at this stage. Consequently we have as yet made no assessment of how many interested parties there might be.

Land Disposals (Vale of Clwyd)

15. **Chris Ruane:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what Ministry of Defence land and assets in the Vale of Clwyd he has recently disposed of; and what further plans he has to dispose of land and assets in the Vale of Clwyd. [17624]

Mr. Touhig: No sites are planned for sale this year or have been sold within the last year. The last sale of surplus MOD property in the area of Clwyd was in August 2003 when part of the Moel Y Parc training area, near Mold was sold.

The Balkans

16. **Mr. Hands:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the security situation in the Balkans. [17625]

Mr. Ingram: The security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is stable. The EU-led operation there continues to provide a safe and secure environment. In Kosovo the situation is stable, but an increase in tension is possible as the final status talks are launched. NATO's KFOR continually monitors the security situation, and is in a strong position to react to any possible threat.

Anglo-Russian Relations

17. **Mr. McGovern:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what developments there have been in relations between Anglo-Russian defence establishments since the awarding of Russian medals to UK submariners. [17626]

John Reid: We already have regular contact with the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence and armed services at several levels across a wide variety of defence matters. The highly successful role played by the Royal Navy and its contractors in the recent rescue of a Russian mini-submarine recognised by President Putin's award of medals to our people on 5 October will help cement these relationships.

Afghanistan

18. **Ms Dari Taylor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on his recent visit to British forces in Afghanistan. [17627]

John Reid: I visited Afghanistan between 30 September and 3 October to meet United Kingdom civilian and military personnel, senior Afghan politicians and senior officers from both NATO and the US-led coalition. I visited Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif and Kandahar and was impressed at each location by British forces' exceptionally high morale, by their effectiveness in delivering security and stability in Afghanistan and by the warmth of the support for British forces from ordinary Afghans.

Initiators

19. **Mr. Hoyle:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future security of supply of initiators currently produced at Royal Ordnance, Chorley. [17628]

Mr. Ingram: I am aware that the production of initiators at BAE Systems site at Chorley has been suspended since an incident at the site in March this year. We are, however, confident in the company's ability to maintain security of supply.

Force Deployments

20. **Michael Gove:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he last discussed with the Chief of the Defence Staff the availability and preparedness of the armed forces for sustained deployments. [17629]

John Reid: I regularly meet with the Chief of Defence Staff and discuss a wide range of issues affecting Defence.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what percentage of the UK armed forces are *(a)* deployed on and *(b)* recuperating from operations. [17660]

Mr. Ingram: Between April 2005 and June 2005 some 18 per cent. of all regular forces were deployed on operations or other military tasks. This figure does not include personnel preparing for operations or recovering from operations.

The percentage of Britain's armed forces presently recuperating from operations is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Information on activity levels is published routinely in the MOD annual report and accounts and the quarterly MOD public service agreement performance reports; these are available on the Ministry of Defence's website.

Medals

22. **Anne Snelgrove:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the backlog of applications is for *(a)* Suez campaign and *(b)* Op Telic 1 medals. [17631]

Mr. Touhig: As at 7 October 2005, 3,794 Suez Canal Zone campaign medal applications were awaiting assessment. Applications are cleared within six months of receipt. As at 7 October 2005, 8,054 Iraq Medal applications were awaiting assessment. Applications are cleared within three months of receipt. Although Op Telic 1 applications are not recorded separately, once they are identified they are given priority and processed in a significantly shorter period.

Iraq

23. **Mr. Hendrick:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the likely impact of the vote on the constitution on the security situation in Iraq. [17632]

John Reid: The vote on the Iraqi constitution is testimony to the courage and fortitude of the Iraqi people in seeking a democratic future. It is likely, however, that terrorists will continue their attempts to disrupt the political process in Iraq. Coalition forces whose presence is supported by the Iraqi Government and mandated by the United Nations will continue to work closely with Iraqi Security Forces to provide and enhance security over this period.

Peace-building Capabilities (Africa)

24. **Lyn Brown:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what role his Department is playing in strengthening African peace-building capabilities. [17633]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence contributes to the strengthening of African peace-building capabilities by training and advising various African armed forces in peace support operations. We do this through permanently-deployed and short-term training teams in key countries. Around 120 British armed forces personnel are based in sub-Saharan Africa to assist in these tasks, this figure does not include our network of defence attachés.

Veterans Awareness Weeks

25. **John Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans his Department has for Veterans Awareness Weeks. [17634]

Mr. Touhig: We are currently considering options for the future, building on the success of the first Veterans' Awareness Week held between 4 and 10 of July this year. I will make an announcement as soon as we have taken a decision on the way ahead.

Air Support Units

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which British air support units are based in Mazar-e Sharif. [18316]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* There are no RAF units based at Mazar-e Sharif. One RAF sergeant is located there to assist with air movements.

Colombia

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what monitoring of UN human rights recommendations relating to aid provided by his Department to Colombia is undertaken; and if he will make a statement. [16209]

Mr. Ingram: The UK's bilateral military assistance to Colombia is consistent with United Nations human rights recommendations. We use the best information available to assure ourselves that Colombian military units or individuals benefiting from UK assistance are not engaged in activities that violate human rights, or internal repression or are in collusion with paramilitary organisations. This includes personal interviews and background checks. Wherever possible, we take all reasonable steps to keep in close contact to maintain this assurance throughout the duration of any project. Our sources of information on possible human rights violations by members of the Colombian security services include the United Nations and independent human rights organisations.

Departmental Estate

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what land and property is in the possession of his Department in East Belfast; and on what terms in each case. [18057]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has the following lands and properties in East Belfast:

Palace Barracks, Holywood—freehold 56.845Ha.

Kinnegar Base, Holywood—freehold 22.826Ha.

Moscow Camp, Belfast Harbour estate—leasehold 6.989Ha.

1137 Sqn, Air Cadets, Belfast city airport—leasehold 0.244Ha.

Three married quarters (outside the military bases). Locations withheld for security reasons. These are held on a freehold basis and are "house and garden".

DML

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the deficiencies in project management at DML, identified by his Department in 1996, have been completely rectified; and if he will make a statement. [16505]

Mr. Ingram: As a result of concerns that the Ministry of Defence had about DML's ability to manage a project as complex as D154, the company was subjected to three pre-contract award evaluations, the first in 1994 and the last in 1996. As reported by the NAO in their 1998 report into the sale of the dockyards, DML were subsequently required to implement a number of changes in order to satisfy the Department that they were adequately resourced and structured. These conditions were met and the changes in structure, processes and systems implemented by DML were instrumental in ensuring that key facilities were ready in time for the start of HMS Vanguard's overhaul in 2002. This was a major achievement, a fact that was recognised by the NAO in their 2002 report "The construction of nuclear submarine facilities at Devonport".

Fixed Wing Aircraft

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many operational fixed wing aircraft there are in the Royal Air Force, broken down by type. [18221]

Mr. Ingram: The following table shows the number of aircraft available for operations planned to be in service with the RAF at the end of the present financial year, broken down by type.

Fixed wing aircraft

Aircraft type	*Total fleet*
BAe125	6
BAe146	2
C-17A Globemaster	4
Canberra PR9	4

Fixed wing aircraft

Aircraft type	*Total fleet*
Harrier FA2	12
Harrier GR	84
Hercules C-130J	25
Hercules C-130K	25
Jaguar	45
Nimrod MR2	21
Nimrod R1	3
Sentry E3-D	7
Tornado F3	97
Tornado GR	139
TriStar	9
VC10	16

Fleet Auxiliary Support

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he last assessed the needs of the Royal Navy for fleet auxiliary support; what the *(a)* provision and *(b)* demand were assessed to be; and what forecast his Department has made of future demand. [18156]

Mr. Ingram: Our requirement for Royal fleet auxiliary support shipping is regularly assessed and we judge that the present fleet of 15 tankers, stores ships and logistic ships is appropriate for the Navy's requirements. As set out on page 18 of "Delivering Security in a Changing World (Future Capabilities)" (CM6269) presented to the House in July 2004, we expect that a support fleet of about this size will remain appropriate for the foreseeable future.

Military Equipment

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the self-provision of equipment by HM forces to make good deficiencies. [16506]

Mr. Ingram: Members of the armed forces are not required to purchase their own military equipment. The equipment they are provided with is sufficient and appropriate for the tasks they are required to undertake. I am aware that some personnel do personalise elements of their issued equipment, but this is personal preference and not due to equipment deficiencies.

US Missile Defence Agency

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what requests the Government have received from the US Missile Defence Agency since 2001; how many were related to ground-based interceptors; and if he will make a statement. [15400]

Mr. Ingram: Officials work closely with the Missile Defence Agency on joint technology programmes and to further our understanding of the US ballistic missile defence system. Requests both to and from the Agency relating to information exchange and other matters, including ground-based interceptors, therefore arise on a daily basis and are too numerous to list. The Government have not received a request from the US to base interceptors in the United Kingdom.

PRIME MINISTER

Air Miles

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister how many air miles were accrued through his official travel in 2004–05; how many were *(a)* foregone and *(b)* donated to charity, broken down by charity; and whether air miles accrued by officials were required to be *(a)* foregone and *(b)* given to charity. [17301]

The Prime Minister: I do not accrue air miles. Under civil service rules, officials are not permitted to use their air miles for private travel.

Climate Change

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister what the outcome was of his discussions with the Indian Government on climate change, with particular reference to the position of the US Administration. [17137]

The Prime Minister: At the 7 September EU-India summit, India and the EU did not make any specific reference to the position of any one country but agreed that urgent action is required by all countries to address the issue of climate change. India and the EU further committed themselves to work together closely on future global negotiations for tackling climate change, consistent with the principles of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) beyond 2012.

I also refer the hon. Member to the India-EU Strategic Partnership joint action plan. This is available on the No. 10 website.

India/China Visits

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials who accompanied him on his recent visits to (i) India and (ii) China. [17139]

The Prime Minister: Since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. Copies of these lists are available in the Library of the House. Information on the number of officials accompanying me on overseas visits is included in the list. All travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers. Information for the year 2005–06 will be published as soon as it is ready after the end of the financial year.

Lord Birt

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister what *(a)* personal attributes and *(b)* relevant experience of Lord Birt led him to put Lord Birt forward for the position of head of Urenco. [17336]

The Prime Minister: The appointment of a chairman of Urenco is not a matter for the Government.

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister what mechanisms were in place to ensure Lord Birt did not have access to papers on Government policy where there may have been a conflict of interest with his role for McKinsey; and if he will make a statement. [17349]

The Prime Minister: Lord Birt is no longer employed by McKinsey.

No. 10 Downing Street

Sarah Teather: To ask the Prime Minister what works are planned for renovating 10 Downing street; and what the estimated costs are. [16884]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Hutton) on 6 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 302W.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Prime Minister what the total cost was of the recent alterations to the main entrance gates to Downing street. [16945]

The Prime Minister: The total cost, including the external railings, turnstile and the access control system, was £154,969.

Tibet

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister whether he raised the issue of Tibet on his recent visit to China; and if he will make a statement. [17138]

The Prime Minister: I discussed human rights, including Tibet, with Premier Wen Jiabao during my visit to China in September 2005. During the visit a list of individual prisoners of particular concern was handed over. This included the Tibetan prisoner Ngawang Phuljung.

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and the Chinese Foreign Minister, Li Zhaoxing, also spoke about Tibet-related issues at their meeting in New York on 19 September. The Government monitor developments in Tibet closely and regularly raises Tibet-related issues with the Chinese Government, including during our biannual UK/China human rights dialogue.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Animal Husbandry

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what regulations apply to the minimum time which must elapse between a calf being born and being removed from its mother. [17226]

Mr. Bradshaw: The separation of a calf from its mother at a young age is a well-recognised industry practice. Legally there is no minimum time that a calf must spend with its mother. However, in the Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2000 provides that every calf "shall receive bovine colostrum as soon as possible after it is born and in any case within the first six hours of life". Defra's Code of Recommendations for the Welfare of Cattle advises that calves should be left with their dam for at least 12 and preferably 24 hours after birth. It also recommends that a calf should continue to receive colostrum from its mother for the first three days of its life.

Animal Trading

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* wild animals and *(b)* products made from animals, illegally traded on the internet she estimates have been imported into the UK in each year since 2000; and if she will make a statement. [17259]

Jim Knight: We do not collect figures in this form.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action the Government are taking *(a)* domestically and *(b)* internationally to prevent the illegal trade in (i) wild animals and (ii) products made from animals on the internet through the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species; and if she will make a statement. [17261]

Jim Knight: The National Wildlife Crime Intelligence Unit based at the National Criminal Intelligence Service have been working with internet service providers in the UK, advising them on the controls affecting the trade in wildlife items, and these providers have responded positively. Ebay, in particular, have recently revised the information given to sellers about the controls relating to the trade in endangered species.

Internationally, we are in contact with other EU member states and CITES parties who also face this problem, and are taking a similar educational approach to it.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the draft Animal Welfare Bill will include provisions to prohibit the sale of *(a)* wild animals and *(b)* products made from animals on the internet; and if she will make a statement. [17262]

Mr. Bradshaw: The United Kingdom is a Party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), which is implemented within the EU by the EU Wildlife Trade Regulation (Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97).

Under this regulation all commercial trade in wild animal species listed as endangered is already prohibited, while trade in the other less species is strictly regulated to ensure that it will not be detrimental to their wild populations.

Animal Transport

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the Scottish Executive regarding imposition of maximum journey times for the export of live animals. [18123]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* The Scottish Executive has been fully involved in the negotiation of new EU rules on the protection of animals during transport, which were agreed by EU Ministers in December 2004. And we are continuing to work closely with the Scottish Executive on the best ways of putting the new rules in place.

Avian Influenza

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she plans to issue a direction that poultry should be kept indoors in order to mitigate the threat of an avian influenza pandemic from migrating birds; and what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of such a course of action. [18355]

Mr. Bradshaw: Requiring birds to be kept indoors is a relatively effective means of reducing the risk of disease being transmitted from wild birds to farmed birds. It is required in all holdings within 3 km of an infected premises during an outbreak of avian influenza.

However it is a significant step which could cause a range of concerns. We are discussing these; with industry representatives.

The risk of highly pathogenic avian influenza being found in the UK as a result of migrating birds is assessed as low. We are working closely with a panel of expert ornithologists and will keep this risk assessment constantly under review as new information becomes available.

Battle Area Community Transport

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to continue Government funding for the Battle Area Community Transport scheme in East Sussex. [18261]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* This question refers to the funding the Battle Area Community Transport received until this year under the Rural Transport Partnership scheme, part of the Countryside Agency's Vital Villages Programme. It has always been the case that this funding was time limited and not to be viewed as mainstream support.

From April 2005 until March 2006, responsibility for the remainder of the Rural Transport Partnership funding for community transport projects in East Sussex has transferred to the South East England Development Agency. The South East England Development Agency is looking at its rural strategic priorities to ensure careful use of funding support available in the future in line with Government priorities. Of course, there is no certainty at this time whether all existing types of projects will still be relevant. It should be noted that the Regional Development Agencies are not the major source of funding for projects such as the Battle Area Community Transport in rural areas, this will continue to be local authorities.

The Battle Area Community Transport scheme also receives a small amount of Bus Service Operators Grant from Department for Transport.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the representations she has received regarding future Government funding for Battle Area Community Transport in East Sussex. [18264]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* The information is as follows:

12 January 2005

Diane Stevens, Hon. Secretary of Rother Association of District Councils wrote to my predecessor, Alun Michael, expressing concern about the future funding for the Battle Area Community Transport in East Sussex in light of the closure of the Countryside Agency's Vital Villages programme.

2 April 2005

Valerie Wright, Chairman of Rother Association of District Councils, wrote again repeating concern about the future of core funding for the Battle Area Community Transport project. This letter was also copied to you.

End of May 2005

A further undated letter from Valerie Wright was received following a letter to the Association from the South East England Development Agency. Mrs. Wright complained that the message that came across from the Agency was that rural inclusion was of low priority.

2 August 2005

The hon. Member wrote urging Defra to reconsider funding for the Battle Area Community Transport, adding that the scheme faces the prospect of closing when funding comes to an end.

Bovine TB

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 949W, on bovine TB, for what reasons her Department does not estimate the number of badgers who die due to infection with bovine TB as part of its bovine TB strategy. [17513]

Mr. Bradshaw: Mortality rates of mammals can only be determined from long term, intensive studies. This would be a very resource intensive exercise, not practical or cost effective to undertake outside of the Randomised Badger Culling Trial areas.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects to make a statement on the Government's plans to deal with the incidence of bovine TB. [18216]

Mr. Bradshaw: The "Government strategic framework for the sustainable control of bovine tuberculosis (bTB) in Great Britain" was published on 1 March 2005. This sets out the Government's high level plans for working in partnership with stakeholders to reduce bovine TB over the next 10 years. I expect to make an announcement on more detailed plans for dealing with bovine TB later this autumn.

BSE

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the Food Standards Agency on the reliability of a test for BSE in cattle that are over 30 months. [18451]

Mr. Bradshaw: Government Ministers have accepted the advice from the Food Standards Agency, that Defra's proposed robust BSE testing system for older cattle should replace the Over Thirty Months (OTM) rule. The system is based on the use of tests which have been evaluated by the EC Commission and approved only if they perform satisfactorily in trials.

Departmental Estate

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she has taken to provide a description of the Department's estate, including *(a)* executive agencies, *(b)* staff numbers, *(c)* buildings and *(d)* any land managed. [15673]

Jim Knight: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, has not been asked to provide a description of the Department's estate but if she were, she would describe the estate as currently comprising just under 230 properties throughout England and Wales. These are a mixture of freehold and leasehold properties, ranging in size from substantial laboratories and large office buildings to small offices with only a few rooms. They are occupied by just under 16,000 staff from the core-Department, its Executive agencies and consultants. The properties include eight farms which are owned by the Department and sub-let.

The estate is actively managed by the Department to ensure it is used efficiently. DEFRA is developing a comprehensive asset management strategy covering both the core Department and its associated public bodies (i.e. its Executive agencies, NDPBs and public corporations). A key aim of the strategy will be to rationalise and improve the use of assets and to dispose of those assets which are under-utilised or under-performing in the best interests of the Exchequer.

Endangered Species

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the factors which underlie the change in the number of gross imports of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species-listed wild-caught birds in *(a)* 2002 and *(b)* 2003. [17135]

Jim Knight: We have not carried out a specific assessment of these figures. Wildlife trade is dynamic and trends over time may reflect such diverse factors as policy decisions in exporting countries (e.g. changes to export quotas), traders gaining access to new sources of supply, market forces (supply and demand) and the actions of CITES (through the significant trade process or EC stricter measures).

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will set up a hotline to facilitate reporting of alleged offences under the Convention on Trade in Endangered Species. [17263]

Jim Knight: The Secretary of State has no immediate plans to establish a dedicated hotline to facilitate the reporting of alleged offences under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. However, any person who suspects such an offence can report it to the police through Crimestoppers which is a 24-hour free anonymous telephone number. Many UK police forces have a dedicated Police Wildlife Crime Officer who will be able to instigate the appropriate action if required.

International Whaling Commission

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will encourage further countries to join the International Whaling Commission. [17090]

Mr. Bradshaw: I plan to meet Ministers from a number of other anti-whaling countries early in November to discuss coordination of our efforts to recruit more of the same to the International Whaling Commission (IWC). We all recognise the need to counter Japanese efforts to recruit more allies and have had some success in this regard in recent years—the Czek Republic, Belgium, Hungary, Luxembourg and Slovakia all being relatively new recruits to the anti-whaling colours. We have also had more limited success recently in dissuading some of Japan's former allies from slavishly taking the Japanese line. We will continue our efforts on both fronts in preparation for the next meeting of the IWC in June 2006.

Live Animal Exports

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will impose eight hours as the maximum journey time in relation to the export of live animals. [17450]

Mr. Bradshaw: The UK has repeatedly pressed for shorter journey times for the transport of animals for slaughter. But when the new EU rules on the protection of animals during transport were negotiated last year, EU Ministers could not reach agreement on changes to journey times. The EU Commission will be reviewing the new rules, including journey times, by 2011.

Marsh Report

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to implement the recommendations of the Marsh Report; and if she will make a statement. [17474]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* The Government have carefully considered the 14 recommendations made by the report of the Independent Review of Dispensing by Veterinary Surgeons of Prescription Only Veterinary Medicines (the Marsh Report). Of the recommendations made, the Government initially accepted eight, one was rejected and the remaining five were considered by the Government as part of a review of existing European legislation and also in response to a Competition Commission report investigating the cost of veterinary POMs.

To avoid frequent changes of UK legislation the Government decided to implement the Marsh recommendations at the same time as it implemented the results of the European review of medicines legislation. This has been done in the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2005, which were subject to extensive public consultation. The regulations were laid in Parliament on 7 October and are due to come into force on 30 October 2005.

The Marsh Report recommendation for a review of distribution categories of veterinary medicinal products is currently being implemented by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD). The VMD has written to interested organisations and stakeholders, requesting that they identify a product, or group of products that they feel should be re-categorised and to explain why.

This consultation ends on 19 October 2005 and further information can be obtained from the VMD website (www.vmd.gov.uk) under "Consultations, Current".

Native Amphibians

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list native amphibians classified as *(a)* critically endangered, *(b)* endangered and *(c)* vulnerable; and what percentage of native amphibians this represents. [17270]

Jim Knight: No native amphibians are listed as critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable under the IUCN Red List categories and criteria.

The Natterjack toad, Great crested newt and Pool frog are listed as Species of Principal Importance under section 74 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Species Action Plans under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) are in place for each of these species.

The Pool frog used to occur in East Anglia but the last known native population declined to extinction in the 1990s. As part of the Pool frog action plan the status of the native species was clarified and subsequently the reintroduction potential was investigated. Following extensive research, the first release in the Pool frog reintroduction programme was undertaken in August 2005 at a site in Norfolk, using animals from Sweden. Further releases to the site will take place in future years, and monitoring will assess how the population establishes.

A review of Priority Species and Habitats under the UKBAP is currently under way and is due to report in 2006.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the risk posed to native amphibians by the fungus *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*; and if she will make a statement. [17271]

Jim Knight: The disease chytridiomycosis, caused by the chytrid fungus *B. dendrobatidis*, has been discovered in an introduced amphibian species, the North American bullfrog, at a site in Kent.

During 2005 English Nature has funded the Institute of Zoology to undertake screening of the native amphibians present at the Kent bullfrog site. This work is still in progress, and results are expected soon. Retrospective sampling of native amphibians collected from various locations in southern England in the 1990s detected no B. *dendrobatidis* infection.

Until the results of the screening of native amphibians at the Kent site are available, it is difficult to give an accurate assessment of the risk posed by the finding of *B. dendrobatidis* in the UK. This is because research in other countries has demonstrated a range of responses by amphibian populations. In some cases the amphibians are infected by *B.dendrobatidis* but appear to show no ill effects, some amphibian populations appear to carry the infection with low levels of health effects and mortality, whilst some populations suffer massive mortality and eventual local extinction.

It is encouraging that during routine inspections at the Kent site there have been no obvious signs of disease or higher than normal mortality among native amphibians. Moreover, to our knowledge there is no reported pattern of symptoms or mortality from other amphibian sites that would be consistent with chytridiomycosis.

The funding of further chytrid screening work in other parts of the UK in 2006 by the Institute of Zoology is currently being discussed.

Poultry Welfare

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make it her policy to ban the use of battery cages for the breeding of *(a)* pheasants and *(b)* partridges. [16872]

Mr. Bradshaw: There has been little in the way of scientific research on the welfare implications of keeping game birds in cages for breeding purposes. However, under the Animal Welfare Bill we plan to introduce a Code of Practice which would include guidance on accommodation. The code would be subject to public consultation and endorsement by Parliament.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what provisions are in place to protect the welfare of ducks reared for food; whether rearing practices will be included in the Animal Welfare Bill; and if she will make a statement. [17144]

Mr. Bradshaw: The welfare of ducks is protected by The Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1968, which makes it an offence to cause unnecessary pain or distress. More detailed standards are laid down in The Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2000 (S.I. 1870), which include specific requirements on inspections, record keeping, freedom of movement, accommodation, feed and water.

There is also a specific code of recommendations for the welfare of ducks. Flock-keepers are required by law to have access to, and be familiar with this code, which encourages all those who care for ducks to adopt the highest standards of husbandry.

There are no plans at present to amend these provisions under the Animal Welfare Bill.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the use of battery cages to hold pheasants and partridges; and what plans she has to improve welfare conditions for such birds. [17252]

Mr. Bradshaw: There has been little in the way of scientific research on the welfare implications of keeping gamebirds in cages for breeding purposes. However, under the Animal Welfare Bill we plan to introduce a Code of Practice which would include guidance on accommodation. The code would be subject to public consultation and endorsement by Parliament.

Recycling

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has *(a)* to increase recycling targets and *(b)* to

provide targets for increased recycling for local authorities beyond 2005–06; and if she will make a statement. [17891]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* Defra is undertaking a review of Waste Strategy 2000 this year. Waste Strategy 2000 included a commitment for a "root-and-branch" review in 2010, with smaller reviews in 2005 and 2015. The 2005 review provides an opportunity to reflect on existing policies and delivery mechanisms, to evaluate progress to date on outcomes and to re-affirm our long-term strategy on waste.

The review will be looking at the targets set in Waste Strategy 2000.

The Government are also currently undertaking a review of recycling and composting targets for local authorities in the light of performance against 2003–04 targets and will look at what levels and what forms of targets will be the most efficient at continuing the recent improvements we have seen. There will be a public consultation on this later this year.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to encourage local councils to increase the volume and proportion of commercial waste which is recycled; and what targets her Department has for increasing such recycling. [18170]

Mr. Bradshaw: Local authorities are not currently under an obligation to collect and dispose of commercial waste. However, under section 45 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, they are required to arrange for the collection of commercial waste if requested to do so by the producer of waste. The authority may charge for the collection of commercial waste. Most commercial waste is collected by private contractors.

All waste collected by a council falls under the heading of municipal waste, even if it comes from commercial sources.

For commercial waste (i.e. that portion of waste originating in the commercial sector which is not collected by local authorities), Waste Strategy 2000 sets out a target to reduce the amount of industrial and commercial waste sent to landfill to 85 per cent. of that landfilled in 1998 by 2005.

The imposition of landfill tax is designed to help the UK achieve this target. The current rate of landfill tax is £18 per tonne, which is set to rise by £3 per year to £35 per tonne by 2010. Business may receive free and independent support and advice to help them increase their profitability by sending less waste to landfill. Envirowise was set up in 1994 for that purpose. Together, these two instruments have gone a long way towards increasing the amount of commercial waste that is being recycled.

The most recent data shows that 36.6 per cent. of commercial waste was recycled or re-used in 2002–03. Over the same period, the amount of commercial and industrial waste that was landfilled was 86 per cent. of the amount landfilled in 1998. This shows that the Government are certainly on course to meet the Waste Strategy 2000 target.

Tap Water

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent research her Department has carried out on the levels of *(a)* female contraceptive residues and *(b)* farm animal growth hormone residues in tap water; and if she will make a statement. [17346]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Drinking Water Inspectorate has promoted research into the issue of oestrogens from contraceptive pills in water. The research investigated the effect of conventional water treatment processes on the removal and breakdown of oestrogens. This showed that disinfection treatments such as chlorination or ozonation destroy these chemicals and physical treatments such as sedimentation or filtration remove them by adsorption.

Other research has shown an absence of oestrogenic response in fish at raw water abstraction points, prior to treatment for drinking water. In light of these results, the Drinking Water Inspectorate is confident that oestrogens will not be detectable in tap water at significant concentrations and no further research is currently planned.

The use of hormonal substances for growth promotion in farm animals has been banned in the EU since 1988. The Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) carries out statutory surveillance to monitor compliance with the ban. Its results show no evidence of abuse of such substances. The VMD's surveillance results are available from its website: www.vmd.gov.uk.

The Government, therefore, believe that no specific research on farm animal growth hormones in tap water is needed, as it is not considered that these substances pose a threat to drinking water quality.

Waste Recovery

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress she has made towards meeting the Government's targets for waste recovery set in 2004. [17581]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Public Service Agreement target on waste recovery, set in 2004,

> "To enable at least 25 per cent. of household waste to be recycled or composted by 2005–06, with further improvement by 2008"

derives from the recovery targets for municipal waste set in Waste Strategy 2000. These targets for recovery of value (by recycling, composting or other forms of material or energy recovery) from municipal waste were set at 40 per cent. by 2005, 45 per cent. by 2010 and 67 per cent. by 2015.

To achieve these levels of recovery, targets for the recycling and composting of household waste were set at 25 per cent. by 2005, 30 per cent. by 2010 and 33 per cent. by 2015.

England successfully exceeded its interim target to recycle and compost 17 per cent. of household waste during 2003–04. Figures published in Defra's Municipal Waste Management Survey show that householders in England recycled and composted nearly 17.7 per cent. of their household waste in 2003–04, up 3:2 per cent. from

14.5 per cent. in 2002–03. Provisional (unaudited) figures for 2004–05 show further improvement to a level approaching 23 per cent.

The Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 1997 (as amended) set UK businesses a target to recover 53.2 per cent. of all packaging waste in 2004. However, the UK performed considerably better than expected and actually achieved a recovery rate of 55.6 per cent.

Wild Birds

Mark Tami: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her estimate of the *(a)* sparrow and *(b)* buzzard population has been in each of the last five years. [16604]

Jim Knight: The latest (2000) figures from the Avian Population Estimates Panel suggest a GB buzzard population of between 36,000 and 51,000 pairs. The latest (2000) figures from the Breeding Birds Survey/ Common Birds Census suggest a GB house sparrow population of between 2,300,000 and 4,100,000 birds. There are no annual counts, but buzzard population trends in the UK between 1994 and 2004 show a 53 per cent. increase, while house sparrow trends were down by 3 per cent. In England over the same period, buzzard populations show a 79 per cent. increase with house sparrow trends down by 10 per cent.

Annual population statistics do not exist for Buzzard. The most recent UK population estimates are set out as follows. The estimate for Buzzard is known to be a significant underestimate, but there has been no formal survey of its current UK population size.

Buzzard

1983 (Northern Ireland) and 1988–1991 (Great Britain)

12,000–17,000 pairs

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will ban the importation of wild caught birds. [17460]

Jim Knight: No. Adequate powers are already available under existing EU legislation to enable the Secretary of State to protect wild birds from the consequences of unsustainable trade and ensure that the relevant health and welfare needs are properly addressed.

TRANSPORT

A1

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what action he is taking to tackle congestion on the A1 in Tyne and Wear and Northumberland. [17763]

Dr. Ladyman: Measures to address congestion on the A1 through Tyneside, were identified in the Tyneside Area Multi Modal Study. The Secretary of State, in his response to the study recommendations in 2003, encouraged the Tyne and Wear local authorities to develop measures to help alleviate congestion, and also asked the Highways Agency (HA) to look at other possible congestion relief measures, including widening. The HA has made substantial progress on identifying widening solutions but this needs to be linked to the predicted outcomes from the local authorities' demand management strategy. We have recently received a Transport Innovation Fund bid from the Tyne and Wear authorities, which if successful will allow them to develop their ideas on this strategy.

In Northumberland the HA is progressing two schemes to upgrade the A1 to dual carriageway standard. These are Morpeth to Felton and Adderstone to Belford. A preferred route has recently been announced on both these schemes.

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* road accidents and *(b)* road fatalities there have been on the A1 (i) in Tyne and Wear and (ii) Northumberland in each of the last 10 years. [17764]

Dr. Ladyman: The following table shows how many *(a)* road accidents and *(b)* road fatalities there have been on the A1 in (i) Tyne and Wear and (ii) Northumberland for the last 10 years.

Number

	Northumberland		*Tyne and Wear*	
	Fatal accidents	*All accidents*	*Fatal accidents*	*All accidents*
1995	1	59	0	96
1996	2	62	0	111
1997	4	68	1	134
1998	6	83	2	136
1999	3	66	2	148
2000	2	70	2	152
2001	1	57	1	144
2002	4	77	2	161
2003	3	67	1	171
2004	5	53	2	143
Total	31	662	13	1,396

A14 (Junction 7)

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the ability of junction 7 of the A14 to cope with the traffic demands of housing expansion in and around Kettering up to 2021. [18487]

Dr. Ladyman: Northamptonshire county council, with major stakeholders including the Highways Agency, is developing a transport model (North Northamptonshire Transport Model) to assess the impact of growth area proposals on the trunk road network (including the A14 around Kettering) and the local highway network. This modelling work will assist local planning authorities in developing their local development frameworks. It will also inform local delivery vehicles of the likely cost of any mitigation work on the highway network. This will assist all parties concerned in developing a way forward for achieving sustainable development in the Kettering area.

Cambridge Guided Bus Scheme

David Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to announce his decision on the Cambridge Guided Bus scheme. [18978]

Dr. Ladyman: My Department is currently considering the inspector's report of the public inquiry into Cambridgeshire County Council's application for an Order under the Transport and Works Act (TWA). Our target is to decide TWA applications within six months of receiving the inspector's report, which in this case would be by the end of January. We will make every effort to resolve the case before then.

David Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he plans to publish the inspector's report on the Cambridge Guided Bus scheme. [18980]

Dr. Ladyman: The inspector's report will be published when the decision is announced, in accordance with standard practice.

Carbon Dioxide Emissions

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average carbon dioxide emissions per air passenger was in each year since 1990. [17351]

Ms Buck: The table below sets out the average annual carbon dioxide emissions per air passenger in kg of CO_2 per passenger for the years 1990–2003 (latest figures). The figures are based upon NETCEN data for emissions and relate to UK departures.

kg CO_2

	Emissions per passenger
1990	364
1991	382
1992	375
1993	377
1994	358
1995	361
1996	366
1997	359
1998	367
1999	376
2000	387
2001	376
2002	358
2003	347

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the annual carbon dioxide emissions from the transport sector were in each year since 2000; and what measures he has in place to reduce these. [17352]

Ms Buck: Information on emissions of carbon dioxide from all sectors is available via the National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory at www.naei.org.uk. The figures for the transport sector are as set out in table 1. 2003 is the latest year for which official figures have been produced.

Table 1: CO_2 emissions from the transport sector, by source and by end-user[1] (expressed as megatonnes of carbon)

MtC

	CO_2 emissions by source	*CO_2 emissions by end-user*
2000	33.65	41.16
2001	33.52	41.21
2002	34.01	41.84
2003	34.36	41.57

[1] End user category emissions for transport also include a share of the emissions from combustion of fossil fuels at power stations and other fuel processing industries. Source category emissions do not.

A summary of the measures currently in place to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from the transport sector and other sectors was published in the December 2004 consultation document on the Review of the UK Climate Change Programme. This is available at www.defra.gov.uk. As part of the Review, the Government are considering the scope for additional policy measures to reduce emissions from all sectors. A revised UK Climate Change programme is due to be published by the end of the year.

David Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what methods his Department uses to assess the global environmental impact, including possible effects on meeting climate change targets, of proposals for new transport infrastructure. [18979]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department for Transport assesses new transport infrastructure proposals using the New Approach to Appraisal (NATA) guidance. This guidance is published on the web and can be found at:

www.webTAG.org.uk

NATA assesses the impacts of new transport infrastructure proposals in terms of the Government's five transport objectives, one of which is to protect the built and natural environment. As part of assessing the impact of new proposals' on the environment, NATA requires scheme promoters to assess the impact of their proposals on greenhouse gas emissions. As carbon dioxide (CO_2) is considered to be the most important greenhouse gas, changes in CO_2 emissions are used as the key indicator for assessing the impacts of new proposals' on climate change.

Corby Link Road

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will fund the construction of the proposed new Corby link road between the A6003 and Corby as a dual carriageway. [18485]

Dr. Ladyman: Following the publication of the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy, Northamptonshire county council now feel there may be a case for dualling this proposed road from the outset. The Department will consider this in the normal way when the county council, as promoters of the scheme, seek the additional funding.

Driving Licences

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what legislation requires the compulsory renewal of driving licences at the age of 70; and if he will make a statement. [17748]

Dr. Ladyman: Section 99 (1) *(a)* of the Road Traffic Act 1988 requires that drivers renew their licences at age 70, and every three years thereafter.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many meetings of the *(a)* EU Committee on application of the legislation on access to the groundhandling market at Community airports, *(b)* EU Advisory Committee on unfair pricing practices

in maritime transport and *(c)* EU Committee on application of the legislation on the minimum level of training for seafarers and the recognition of certificates issued by training institutes or administrations of third countries (STCW) are planned for the UK presidency of the EU; who will be presiding over each meeting; which other UK representatives will be present; what provision is in place for representation of the devolved governments; and if he will make a statement. [16460]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is as follows:

(a) None.

(b) One meeting of the Ad hoc Advisory Committee on Restrictive Practices and Dominant Positions (liner shipping) has been convened by the European Commission during the UK presidency. We do not know if the Commission will consider convening further meetings in this period. This committee is chaired by officials of the Commission (DG COMP). The UK is represented by officials from DTI, supported by OFT and DfT. Devolved Administrations are invited to attend these meetings as part of the UK delegation.

(c) None.

EU Emissions Trading Scheme

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what position the Government are advocating with EU partners in respect of the inclusion within the EU emissions trading scheme of non-EU aircraft landing at European airports. [17179]

Ms Buck: The Government's aim set out in the White Paper "The Future of Air Transport", published in 2003, is to achieve an environmentally effective emissions trading regime for the aviation sector that takes due regard of competition impacts and is non-discriminatory as to EU and non-EU operators. The operation of the scheme will be subject to consideration with EU partners and detailed discussion has not yet begun. The UK position will be underpinned by a rigorous assessment of impacts, including those related to competition.

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if his Department will delay an increase in airport runway capacity at Stansted airport until such time as the aviation industry is fully included in a European-wide carbon trading scheme. [17274]

Ms Buck: The White Paper set out the Government's intention to press for the inclusion of aviation in the EU emissions trading scheme in 2008 or as soon as possible thereafter. It is for the airport operator to bring forward plans for a possible new runway at Stansted airport.

Heavy Goods Vehicles

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to respond to the recent consultation on the conspicuity of heavy goods vehicles. [18448]

Dr. Ladyman: A summary of the responses to the consultation will shortly be published on the Department for Transport website.

In the light of the analysis of results of the consultation exercise DfT officials representing the UK at the 3–7 October meeting of the United Nations' Working Party on Vehicle Lighting opposed the proposal to mandate conspicuity tape for heavy vehicles and trailers. However, majority opinion at the meeting was in favour and the outcome was that mandatory fitment was agreed for certain new vehicles with a gross vehicle weight (GVW) exceeding 7.5 tonnes and certain new trailers exceeding 3.5 tonnes.

Infrastructure Development (Bournemouth)

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on his plans to develop transport infrastructure in the Bournemouth area. [17077]

Ms Buck: It is for Bournemouth borough council, the local transport authority, in consultation with: members of the community; key stakeholders; and partners, to determine local transport priorities.

Transport priorities are brought forward to Ministers through the Local Transport Plan process and my officials are currently assessing the second Local Transport Plan for the area. This plan covers the administrative areas of: Bournemouth, the borough of Poole; and parts of Dorset county council. During the first round of Local Transport Plans funding for the area increased from £2.37 million in 2000–01 to £5.756 million in 2005–06 and I look forward to working with the authorities as they progress delivery of this second plan.

London Hackney Carriages

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will set out what regulations restrict Hackney carriages outside London from picking up passengers when flagged down on the street. [17502]

Ms Buck: Under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847, hackney carriage drivers outside London (in England and Wales) are licensed to ply for hire within a "prescribed distance" (normally, as is the case in Solihull, the whole of the local authority area, but if the area is divided into zones, then one or more zones). The drivers can wait at ranks and they can pick up passengers who flag them down while they are located in their own prescribed distance; they cannot accept immediate hirings—whether at ranks or flag-downs—while outside this area.

In addition to the provisions of taxi legislation, there is also the possibility of regulations restricting the use of hackney carriages on public highways which might have implications for where drivers can accept flagged hirings. These regulations are matters for local traffic authorities. Traffic authorities have powers to restrict or regulate the use of a road by vehicular traffic of any class under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Maritime Safety

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many ships were detained in each British port by

the Maritime and Coastguard Agency due to *(a)* sub-standard conditions and *(b)* breaches in safety management systems in 2004. [17899]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is as follows.

Place of inspection/port	*Number detained*
Aberdeen	3
Belfast	7
Birkenhead	2
Blyth	1
Bristol	3
Cardiff	1
Chatham	2
Cleveland	1
Dover	1
Dundee	1
Falmouth	2
Glasgow	1
Goole	1
Grimsby	1
Hartlepool	1
Harwich	3
Hull	8
Immingham	3
Ipswich	2
Liverpool	1
Lochaline	1
Lowestoft	1
Newhaven	1
Newlyn	1
Newport	4
Peterhead	2
Plymouth	2
Port Talbot	3
Purfleet	1
River Tees/Teesport	5
Rochester	1
Royal Portbury	4
Sheerness	6
Silvertown, River Thames	1
Southampton	8
Stanlow	1
Stockton	2
Sunderland	1
Swansea	1
Tilbury	8
Tyne	2
Total	101

Midland Mainline

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the level of subsidy to Midland Mainline has been in each year since the first franchise was awarded; and what estimate has been made of the level of subsidy in each year until the end of the current franchise. [18486]

Derek Twigg: The Midland Mainline franchise commenced in April 1996. In August 2000 the franchise was extended for two years and as part of that arrangement has neither received any public subsidy nor made any premia payments since January 2001. This position will continue until the end of the franchise. Before 2001, the schedule of annual franchise payments was as follows.

£

Franchise year	*Total franchise payments to Midland Mainline*
1996–97	16,454,794.52
1997–98	6,620,838.50
1998–99	1,010,861.18
1999–2000	- 201,870.40
2000–01	- 1,194,868.80

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to increase the rail capacity on Midland Mainline to take account of population growth in Kettering under the Sustainable Communities plan. [18489]

Derek Twigg: A Midlands Mainline Route Utilisation Strategy was published in March 2004. We will review the capacity of the Midland Main Line when drawing up the specification for a new franchise to replace the current one, which expires in April 2008.

Public Transport (East Sussex)

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total Government spending on public transport schemes in East Sussex has been in each year since 1997. [18263]

Ms Buck *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* The following table shows the amounts spent on local public transport in East Sussex in each year since 1997:

£ million

	County council's revenue support for bus services[1]	*Local transport capital allocations*[2]
1997–98	2.52	9.05
1998–99	2.82	4.80
1999–2000	3.44	5.22
2000–01	3.91	7.80
2001–02	3.42	10.06
2002–03	3.70	10.80
2003–04	3.90	10.70
2004–05	[3]3.92	13.22

[1] Local authorities provide funding for subsidised local bus services mainly through their Revenue Support Grant (RSG) provided by the Government.

[2] This Department provides funding for local transport capital projects including the provision of facilities and infrastructure (for example bus lanes) used by public transport.

[3] Estimate.

The above figures for revenue support for buses include expenditure met from funds allocated to the authority from the Department's Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (RBSG) scheme. The RBSG annual allocation for East Sussex has risen from £0.56 million in 1998–99 to £0.91 million this year. In addition, East Sussex has been allocated funding totalling £3.68 million from Rural and Urban Bus Challenge competitions held between 1998 and 2003 for projects typically lasting three years. I understand that funding has also been provided by DEFRA through the Countryside Agency for local transport schemes in the county.

Railway Stations

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what percentage of the expenditure on stations announced by Network Rail on 10 October 2005 is to be spent outside London. [17777]

Derek Twigg: This is a commercial matter for Network Rail. However, I understand that as well as working with developers on proposals to develop major stations in London, the company is looking for partners to take forward schemes to benefit up to 50 larger regional stations. At smaller stations across the country, instead of previous piecemeal upgrades, Network Rail plans to group sites together into clusters and to offer them to single developers as whole line of route packages.

Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made with the feasibility study on a possible renewable transport fuel obligation; and if he will make a statement. [16995]

Dr. Ladyman: The study has been considering the legal and administrative feasibility of a Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation as well as its cost-effectiveness and compatibility with other government objectives. A number of stakeholder workshops were held in the spring to discuss some of the key issues, and meetings have also been held with the European Commission and others. We are close to completing the feasibility study, and hope to publish it shortly.

Road Safety (Mobile Telephones)

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how much funding has been allocated to dissuading motorists from using hand-held mobile telephones while driving; [17961]

(2) what road safety campaigns are operating to deter motorists from using a hand-held mobile telephone when driving a motor vehicle. [17962]

Dr. Ladyman: Mobile phone publicity forms part of the Government's THINK! road safety campaign. Radio and cinema advertising has been used primarily to encourage motorists not to use a hand held mobile phone while driving, but the campaign has also produced posters and leaflets which are distributed free to employers via local authority road safety officers who support our campaigns within their areas. Variable messages signs on motorways also carry advice regarding mobile phones in rotation with other THINK! Road safety messages.

From the financial year 2003–04 when the legislation banning the use of hand held mobile phones was introduced until 5 April 2005, the Department invested over £1.5 million in mobile phone publicity campaigns. The Department estimates that it will spend a further £500,000 on publicity in this area in this financial year.

In addition, in the financial year 2004–05 the Department paid a grant to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents under the DFT's challenge fund to prepare a leaflet on "Mobile Phones and Driving for Employers" which contained advice and a sample policy that employers might put in place. This project cost £10,376. The report is available free from ROSPA's website at http://www.rospa.com/roadsafety/info/workmobiles.pdf.

Road Safety Advertising

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what national advertising campaigns relating to *(a)* reducing speed and *(b)* drink driving there have been in each of the last five years. [18091]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government have run national advertising campaigns relating to reducing speed for over 10 years and to reducing drink drive for nearly 40 years.

Advertising on each of these areas is taken forward under the THINK! road safety campaign, which has an annual budget of £14.1 million. Other campaign subjects include seatbelts, teenagers and children, motorcycles, driver tiredness and mobiles.

Speed is a year-round problem and to tackle this, the speed reduction campaign runs activity at staggered intervals throughout the year. The campaign includes TV, radio, cinema and posters with an additional radio and poster element dealing specifically with speeding on rural roads.

The drink drive campaign runs an integrated campaign every year focused particularly at Christmas and in the summer when the killed and seriously injured statistics peak. The campaign traditionally always includes TV, radio and posters and has included cinema advertising since summer 2004. In addition, we have broadened our reach to the target audience of young men by linking with the drinks industry. For example, 20,000 pubs across the country supported the summer 2005 campaign by placing posters highlighting the issue in their pubs.

Stansted Airport Expansion

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the possible impact of *(a)* changes in the cost of aviation fuel and *(b)* public attitudes to the environmental impact of the aviation industry on plans for expansion of Stansted airport. [17486]

Ms Buck: The policy set out in the Air Transport White Paper to support a second runway at Stansted took account of the economic, social and environmental impacts.

The Department's air passenger forecasts are kept under review and this process takes account of changes in the cost of aviation fuel along with other factors.

BAA's planning application for a new runway at the airport will be subject to the requirements of the statutory land-use planning system. A full environmental assessment will be an important consideration during this process.

Yellow School Buses

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made with encouraging the use of yellow school buses as a means of reducing traffic congestion. [17461]

Ms Buck: We know from our evaluation of various small-scale yellow and other dedicated school bus schemes that well-designed schemes have the potential to reduce car dependency for journeys to school and the traffic congestion that results from this. However, care needs to be taken to ensure that schemes do not reduce levels of walking or cycling or undermine the viability of important bus services available to the wider public.

We therefore want to encourage individual local authorities to consider school bus schemes as part of broader local transport planning and to decide whether or not they would be appropriate to their area. We will give capital bids for such schemes careful consideration, taking account of value for money, regional priorities and affordability. We approved £18.7 million funding for a yellow bus scheme serving 100 schools in West Yorkshire as part of the local transport settlement for 2004–05. Funding for this project is being released in three phases with the release of the third phase of funding subject to the first phase meeting its objectives with respect to modal switch from car.

Department for Education and Skills Ministers are currently considering how best to take forward the manifesto commitment to support innovation in home to school transport.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adoptions

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will assess the impact of the post-adoption support rules on access of adopted children and their parents to social services. [18928]

Maria Eagle: The Government recognise the importance of providing support to adoptive children and their adoptive families. The Adoption and Children Act 2002 introduced, for the first time, a clear duty on local authorities to arrange for the provision of adoption support services in their area. The new duty has also been accompanied by a ring-fenced grant to local authorities totalling nearly £70 million between 2003–04 and 2005–06. The first phase of adoption support services for adopted children and their families was implemented on 31 October 2003. Adoptive children and their families have a right to an assessment of their needs for adoption support services. Regulations set out a transparent procedure for making decisions about the services to be provided in individual cases. This should ensure greater and more consistent access to adoption support services for adopted children and parents.

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the co-ordination of support services for adopted children with psychological and behavioural difficulties. [18929]

Maria Eagle: The Government recognise the importance of providing support to adoptive children and their adoptive families. The Adoption and Children Act 2002 introduced, for the first time, a clear duty on local authorities to arrange for the provision of adoption support services in their area. This new duty has been accompanied by a ring-fenced grant to local authorities totalling nearly £70 million between 2003–04 and 2005–06. The first phase of adoption support services for adopted children and their families was implemented on 31 October 2003. It included therapeutic services for adoptive children and training for adoptive parents to meet any special needs of the adoptive child. These services will clearly benefit adopted children with psychological and behavioural difficulties. Furthermore, each local authority is required to appoint an Adoption Support Services Adviser to ensure that suitable inter-agency working arrangements are in place between social services, education, local health trusts and other agencies.

Adult Education

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the impact on the number of adult education courses of the recent change to the funding regime for the Continuing Education and Training Service. [17574]

Phil Hope: We are committed to safeguarding the continued availability of a wide range of learning opportunities for adults for personal and community development. We said in the White Paper Skills: 'Getting on in Business, Getting on at Work', published in March this year, that the DfES and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) would agree each year an overall indicative budget for such learning programmes. In 2004/05 nationally we provided over £207 million to the Learning and Skills Council in support of this learning. This has risen to £210 million in 2005/06. Announcements about the budgets for 2006/07 and 2007/08 will be made shortly.

The Learning and Skills Council for London South plans, funds and monitors the provision of Adult Learning in Croydon on behalf of the Secretary of State. The total Further Education and Adult and Community Learning budget for Croydon's Continuing Education and Training Service has increased between 2004/05 and 2005/06 by £260,304. Their agreed development plan gives no indication of reduction in provision as a result of any change to the funding regime.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students have participated *(a)* in adult education courses and *(b)* in courses for people with learning disabilities in further education colleges in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [17796]

Bill Rammell: The following table shows the number of learners in further education (FE) provision funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for each year from 2001/02 to 2003/04:

Students in FE colleges and external institutions

Academic year[1]	*Number (Thousand)*
2001/02	3,868.0
2002/03	4,197.3
2003/04	4,114.2

[1] The figures for 2002/03 onwards are on a different basis from those for earlier years, so are not directly comparable with the figures for 2001/02. The figures from 2002/03 onwards are more comprehensive as they include some institutions (such as specialist designated institutions) previously excluded from statistical publications, and also take into account changes to funding arrangements made by the LSC since taking over responsibility

for FE funding. The impact of these changes is estimated to have increased learner numbers by around 250,000 between 2001/02 and 2002/03.

It is not possible to identify courses specifically designed for students with learning disabilities from the Individual Learner Record (ILR) data collection. However, it is possible to identify whether students self-declare themselves as having a learning difficulty and/or disability (LLDD), and numbers for the last five years have been given in answer to the hon. Member's related parliamentary question, number 17821.

Provision for learners with LLDD remains a priority and the LSC's expectation is that the overall proportion of such learners will be maintained.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students with learning disabilities have enrolled in adult education courses in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [17821]

Bill Rammell: The following table shows the number of learners in further education (FE) provision funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) with a self-declared learning difficulty and/or disability (LLDD). Figures are given for each year from 1999/2000 to 2003/04:

Adult education

Number (Thousand)

Academic year[1]	*Students self-declared as LLDD in FE colleges and external institutions*
1999/2000	157.4
2000/01	213.1
2001/02	272.8
2002/03	325.4
2003/04	349.3

[1] The figures for 2002/03 onwards are on a different basis from those for earlier years, so are not directly comparable with the figures up to 2001/02. The figures from 2002/03 onwards are more comprehensive as they include some institutions (such as specialist designated institutions) previously excluded from statistical publications, and also take into account changes to funding arrangements made by the LSC since taking over responsibility for FE funding. The impact of these changes is estimated to have increased overall learner numbers by around 250,000 between 2001/02 and 2002/03, but the effect on numbers of LLDD in particular has not been estimated.

After-school Care

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether she plans to run pilot schemes for Children First clubs as part of the Department's plans for provision for children out of school hours; and if she will make a statement. [17105]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* We are committed to ensuring access for all children to a variety of activities beyond the school day. As part of our extended schools strategy, we recently announced funding of £680 million to support schools, through their local authorities, towards developing extended services, including breakfast and after school clubs. By 2010, extended services will be accessible through all our schools; and in half of primary schools and a third of secondary schools by 2008.

We do not endorse individual organisations and so will not be running pilot schemes with Children First. It will be for schools, in consultation with parents and their communities, to decide how to roll out such activities. Some may choose to deliver them direct, or through voluntary or private sector providers like Children First.

CAFCASS

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding has been allocated for the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service computer system in each year since its foundation. [18742]

Maria Eagle: No separately identifiable funding has been allocated to the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service in respect of its computer system, and it is not usual to do so. However, CAFCASS has outlined its future IT requirements and discussed them with my officials, who have advised on the options available and on how the procurement should be approached. I have asked CAFCASS to provide a business case, for departmental approval, when it is ready.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding has been given to Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service in each of the last five years; and how much is planned for *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* 2006–07. [18743]

Maria Eagle: The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) was established in April 2001. Funding allocations in the previous four years were as follows:

2001–02: £80.8 million cash

2002–03: £84.5 million cash (including £4 million unspent in 2001–02)

2003–04: £97.5 million on a resource basis (provision of £2.5 million was also made for 2002–03 debts in the transition from cash to resource accounting)

2004–05: £107 million on a resource basis

Resource budgets for CAFCASS have been earmarked as follows:

(a) 2005–06: £101 million (£6 million of the £107 million baseline was transferred to the National Assembly for Wales on the devolution of CAFCASS Cymru)

(b) 2006–07: £101 million (provisional)

I am monitoring the current financial position of CAFCASS and I am discussing the budget pressures with the chair and chief executive.

Correspondence

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Walsall, North of 30 August regarding a constituent. [17100]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* I responded to my hon. Friend's letter on 13 October.

Departmental Budget

Helen Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the latest estimate is of

underspend by her Department *(a)* in cash terms and *(b)* as a percentage of departmental budget for financial year 2004–05. [18308]

Bill Rammell: The figures requested were reported in the Public Expenditure Outturn White Paper (PEOWP) 2004–05 (Cm 6639).

Further Education Funding

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what factors were taken into account in making the decision to reduce the annual cash growth allocated to the further education sector for 2005/06 in the Government spending review. [17923]

Bill Rammell: Funding for the further education (FE) sector is not being reduced. We are putting more money than ever into further education. Total funding for the FE sector will increase by over £1 billion in 2005/06 compared to 2002/03—a 25 per cent. increase.

The Department allocates funds for education and training in the post-16 learning and skills sector to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) through our annual grant letter. Funding allocations for FE providers increased by 16.3 per cent. between 2002/03 and 2003/04, by 9.1 per cent. between 2003/04 and 2004/05, and by 4.4 per cent. between 2004/05 and 2005/06.

The particularly large increase in 2003–04 is a result of the consolidation of previously targeted funds, and the extra investment through Success for All. All colleges received increases in core funding rates of 2.5 per cent. above inflation in 2004–05 and 2005–06, with some colleges receiving even higher increases. The relatively lower increase in 2005–06 is still significantly higher than inflation and in part reflects actual learner numbers in colleges as compared to plans, and the Government's intention—as set out in the Skills Strategy and reaffirmed in the Skills White Paper: "Getting on in Business, Getting on in Work"—to rebalance over time the contributions of the state, employers and individuals towards the costs of learning. This was reflected in a 2.5 percentage point increase in the assumed fee contribution to the cost of learning for those learners not in national entitlement groups. Even so, this resulted in seven out of 10 colleges receiving an above inflation increase in budget—almost half of them getting an increase of over 5 per cent.

Graduate Employment

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of *(a)* graduates and *(b)* graduates from ethnic minorities were employed within (i) six months, (ii) one year and (iii) two years of leaving university in each year from 2001 to 2005; and if she will make a statement. [15499]

Bill Rammell: The latest available information showing employment rates six months after graduation is shown in the table. The Department does not hold information on employment rates of ethnic minorities one year or two years after leaving university.

Figures showing the first destinations of graduates in 2004–05, six months after graduation, will be available in summer 2006.

Percentage[1] of UK domiciled full-time first degree graduates from UK HE institutions in employment six months after graduation[2], by ethnicity

Year of graduation	*Non-white*	*All*
2000–01	60	68
2001–02[3]	59	67
2002–03	66	72
2003–04	67	72

[1] Based upon graduates of known ethnicity and known first destination. In each year 3–5 per cent. of graduates are of unknown ethnicity.

[2] For 2000–01 and 2001–02 the information is taken from the First Destination Supplement. In 2002–03 this was replaced by the Destination of Leavers from HE survey, hence figures are not directly comparable between the two data sources.

[3] In 2001–02 a new coding frame for ethnicity was introduced that allowed a more accurate classification for students of mixed ethnicity. As such, figures for 2000–01 may not be directly comparable to later figures.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

While fewer minority ethnic graduates are likely to be in jobs initially, research tends to suggest that those in jobs may be in 'better" jobs than white graduates. The research also found that ethnic minority graduates were more likely to be in further training or study[1].

[1] *Source:*

Why the difference? A Closer Look at Higher Education Minority Ethnic Students and Graduates: DfES, 2004.

Langlands Report

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she expects to announce the Government's response to Sir Alan Langlands' Gateways to the Professions report. [18155]

Bill Rammell: Sir Alan Langlands agreed with the Secretary of State for Education and Skills that his report would be published, along with the Government's response, in the autumn. A written statement was made to the House to this effect on 20 July 2005. I expect the report and the Government's response to be published in November.nb

PhD Students

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of PhD students in the UK emigrated to work abroad following the completion of their degree in the last period for which figures are available. [18395]

Bill Rammell: The available information is taken from the Destination of Leavers from HE (DLHE) survey collected annually by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). The DLHE survey collects information on the first destination, six months after qualifying, for UK and EU students. The latest available information is given in the table.

Students obtaining doctorate qualifications who were employed overseas six months after graduation, 2003/04

Domicile	*Percentage*[1]
UK	8.6
EU	43.3
UK and EU	12.7

[1] Percentages are based upon all qualifiers of known first destination. The overall response rate for doctoral qualifiers was just over 60 per cent.

Source:
HESA.

Post-16 Education

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many young people *(a)* participated in further education and *(b)* were categorised as not in education, employment or training in each of the last five years. [17816]

Bill Rammell: The breakdown of the number and percentage of young people (aged 16 to 18) participating in education, training and employment (including those not in education, employment or training (NEET)) over the last five years is given in the table.

	As at end of the calendar year:				
	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*[1]
Number (Thousand)					
Full-time education	1,010.4	1,027.4	1,059.7	1,086.1	1,112.6
Work Based Learning (WBL)	167.3	156.6	151.4	156.7	153.2
Other education and training[2]	188.3	201.8	202.9	206.8	207.2
Total in education and training	1,362.2	1,382.7	1,410.7	1,446.2	1,469.6
In employment	262	287	297	300	286
NEET	166	179	185	183	194
Population	606.7	633.5	631.6	645.8	659.0
Percentage					
Full-time education	56.4	55.6	56.0	56.3	57.1
Work Based Learning (WBL)	9.3	8.5	8.0	8.1	7.9
Other education and training[2]	10.5	10.9	10.7	10.7	10.6
Total in education and training	76.1	74.8	74.5	75.0	75.4
In employment	15	16	16	16	15
NEET	9	10	10	9	10

[1] Provisional.
[2] Includes Employer Funded Training (EFT) and other part-time education not funded by employers or through WBL; also those in private FE and HE institutions.

Source:
Statistical First Release, "Participation in Education, Training and Employment by 16 to18 Year Olds in England".

Prisoners

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of prisoners completed an educational course at a single facility in each of the last five years. [18695]

Phil Hope: The information requested has been placed in the House Libraries.

Special Needs Education

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent, as a proportion of total budget, by Essex local education authority on special needs education in each of the last seven years. [18783]

Maria Eagle: The information requested is only available from 2000–01 onwards and is contained within the following table:

	Budgeted net expenditure on the provision of education for children with special educational needs (£)	*Total education revenue expenditure*[1] *(£)*	*Budgeted net expenditure on the provision of education for children with SEN as a percentage of total education revenue expenditure*
2000–01	62,904,000	556,060,000	11.3
2001–02	68,285,000	607,373,000	11.2
2002–03	69,328,000	642,450,000	10.8
2003–04	75,876,000	690,692,000	11.0
2004–05	81,359,000	728,708,000	11.2
2005–06[2]	87,946,000	789,967,000	11.1

[1] Total education revenue expenditure is the combination of the total schools budget and the total local authority budget.
[2] 2005–06 data are provisional and are subject to change by the local authority.

Notes:
1. Includes planned expenditure on the provision for pupils with statements and the provision for non-statemented pupils with SEN, support for inclusion, inter authority recoupment, fees for pupils at independent special schools and abroad, educational psychology service, local authority functions in relation to child protection, therapies and other health related services, parent partnership, guidance and information, the monitoring of SEN provision and inclusion administration, assessment and co-ordination. Also included is the funding delegated to nursery, primary and secondary schools identified as "notional SEN" and the individual schools budget (ISB) for special schools.
2. The ISB for special schools will include some general education costs for pupils with SEN in addition to those costs specifically for SEN while the figures recorded against "notional SEN" are only indicative of the amount that might be spent by schools on SEN and, from 2004–05 onwards, "notional SEN" delegated to nursery schools was reported on section 52 for the first time and this

accounts for £13,000 and £14,000 of the 2004–05 and 2005–06 totals respectively. In 2005–06, Essex also budgeted £13.5 million for SEN transport expenditure but this is not included in the budgeted net expenditure on SEN as figures are not available prior to 2005–06.

3. Figures are as reported by the LEA in cash terms as at 13 October 2005 and are rounded to the nearest thousand pounds and may not sum due to founding.

Student Finance

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether mature students are eligible for financial support in undertaking a five-year degree in medicine. [17190]

Bill Rammell: Mature students have the same access to financial support for the undergraduate degree in medicine as do younger students. If entering higher education in 2005–06, they could be eligible during the first four years of the course for tuition fee support, the Higher Education Grant, a student maintenance loan and any more specialised grant like the child care grant (which in fact is mainly received by mature students). Currently the only restrictions on funding for eligible students are on tuition fees if a student has previous study and on the maintenance loan if a student is aged over 55 (or 50 if not going into work subsequently). From 2006–07 there will be no age limit applied to the fee loan and the age limit on maintenance loans will be increased to age 60. The Department of Health pay tuition fees and provide bursaries in the fifth and any subsequent year of the course.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the likely effect of the exclusion of graduate students from tuition fee deferment on the graduate student population's *(a)* ethnic diversity and *(b)* diversity of financial background. [18401]

Bill Rammell: The HE Act 2004 does not change the funding position of post-graduate students. Tuition fees for post-graduate courses remain unregulated, with students paying their own fees or receiving research council awards.

A Race Impact Assessment was carried out and equality issues were considered in the policy development of variable fees in relation to full-time undergraduate students. No separate assessment was made for part-time or post-graduate students as fees for these students were already unregulated.

The new arrangements, including extra financial support, for undergraduates should increase and broaden participation at that level and feed through over time into extra demand for postgraduate study including among students who might not otherwise have entered HE at all.

HOME DEPARTMENT

ASBOs

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders were issued in North Yorkshire in each of the last three years. [17364]

Hazel Blears: The available information is given in the table.

Number of ASBOs issued at all courts in the North Yorkshire criminal justice system area, as notified to the Home Office, by period

Period	Number issued
1 January 2002 to 31 December 2002	0
1 January 2003 to 31 December 2003	8
1 January 2004 to 31 December 2004	22
Total	30

Bruche Police Training Centre

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what value was placed on the land and buildings at Bruche Police Training Centre prior to their transfer to Centrex. [16888]

Hazel Blears: The Bruche site and buildings were transferred to Centrex at the written down value in the Home Office accounts according to the practice defined by HM Treasury for asset transfers between government entities. The written down value on 1 April 2002 was £3 million.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions have been held with Centrex about the future use of the site of the police training centre at Bruche. [16890]

Hazel Blears: Discussions have taken place between officials and Centrex about planning for options for disposal. Any substantive options around future use of the site will depend on who is interested in purchasing the site.

Compact Mediation Scheme

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost was of the compact mediation scheme in each of the last three years for which figures are available; and how many complaints it received in each year. [16514]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The costs for the mediation scheme have been:

April 2005 to date: £250 for administering the scheme. The contract running from April 2005 and April 2006 has been agreed on a call off basis for each case of mediation. There was one case that went to mediation. This also resulted in costs of £1,000 shared between the parties concerned.

April 2004 to April 2005: £10,000. This was a flat rate for administration of the scheme for the year.

January 2003 to April 2004: £15,000 flat rate for administration of the scheme. There was one case that went to mediation, attracting additional costs of £2,000 for the parties concerned.

The number of complaints or inquiries dealt with averaged at around 25 each year. Precise figures have not been kept.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the aims are of the compact mediation scheme. [16515]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The compact mediation scheme is independent service which aims to resolve disputes between voluntary and community sector and government bodies. Through the scheme neutral advisors are available to mediate between the parties.

Consultants

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many consultants are employed by his Department to advise on *(a)* police force numbers and *(b)* the reorganisation of police authorities. [17565]

Hazel Blears: No consultants are employed by the Home Office to advise on police force numbers or on the reorganisation of police authorities.

Crime

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on current levels of *(a)* violent crime, *(b)* car crime, *(c)* sexual crime, *(d)* burglary and *(e)* robbery in Southend, West constituency. [16594]

Hazel Blears: The Southend, West constituency comes within the Southend basic command unit. The current levels of recorded offences for the crimes requested are given in the table.

Recorded crimes in the Southend crime and disorder reduction partnership area: 2004–05

Offence type	*Number*
Violent against the person	3,318
Sexual offences[1]	200
Robbery	296
Violent crime	3,814
Domestic burglary	913
Vehicle crime	2,022

[1] The Sexual Offences Act 2003, introduced in May 2004, altered the definition and coverage of sexual offences.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on current detection rates of *(a)* violent crime, *(b)* car crime, *(c)* sexual crime, *(d)* burglary and *(e)* robbery in Southend, West constituency. [16595]

Hazel Blears: The Southend, West constituency comes within the Southend basic command unit. The detection rates for the crimes requested are given in the following table.

Detection rates in the Southend crime and disorder reduction partnership area: 2004–05

Offence type	*Percentage detected*
Violent against the person	60
Sexual offences	37
Robbery	26
Violent crime	56
Domestic burglary	17
Vehicle crime	9

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on *(a)* levels and *(b)* detection rates of (i) violent crime, (ii) sexual crime, (iii) car crime, (iv) robbery and (v) burglary in the Hornsey and Wood Green constituency. [17008]

Hazel Blears: The Hornsey and Wood Green constituency comes within the Haringey basic command unit. The levels of recorded offences and detection rates for the crimes requested are given in the tables.

Recorded crimes in the Haringey basic command unit—2004–05

Offence type	*Number of offences*
Violence against the person	6,326
Sexual offences[1]	423
Robbery	1,430
Violent crime	8,179
Domestic burglary	3,184
Vehicle crime	4,996

[1] The Sexual Offences Act 2003, introduced in May 2004, altered the definition and coverage of sexual offences.

Detection rates in the Haringey basic command unit—2004–05

Offence type	*Percentage detected*
Violence against the person	46
Sexual offences[1]	38
Robbery	15
Violent crime	40
Domestic burglary	16
Vehicle crime	4

[1] The Sexual Offences Act 2003, introduced in May 2004, altered the definition and coverage of sexual offences.

Criminal Courts

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the recommendation regarding disclosure made by Lord Justice Auld in his review of the criminal courts report has been implemented. [16470]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government's response to Sir Robin Auld's recommendations, including those on disclosure, is set out in the Annex to the Criminal Justice White Paper: "Justice for All" (CM 5563) issued in July 2002. In large part the recommendations on disclosure were accepted and implemented in the Criminal Justice Act 2003, the relevant provisions of which came into force on four April 2005. The recommendation that the Government consider setting up a new statutory scheme for third party disclosure remains under consideration. Owing to its wide ranging and complex nature, an interdepartmental working party has been established to take forward this recommendation.

Drugs

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the value of the illegal drugs trade in 2004–05, broken down by *(a)* London borough and *(b)* police authority; and if he will make a statement. [17014]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* The Home Office does not estimate the value of the illegal drugs trade at a local level. We do, however, estimate the overall size of the market for illicit drugs on a national basis. In 2001, the Home Office published an estimate of the size of the market for illicit drugs in the UK which amounted to

around £6.6 billion in 1998. Full details of this study (Occasional Paper 74) are available to download at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/drugs1.html.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of progress towards the target of halving drug use, stated in Tackling Drugs to build a Better Britain. [16483]

Paul Goggins: The Comprehensive Spending Review, published in July 1998, included targets that reflected the aims set out in Tackling Drugs to build a Better Britain. These targets were revised in subsequent Spending Reviews to reflect the developing evidence base and provide a clear focus on delivery and outcomes.

My department reports on performance against targets in its autumn and annual reports, copies of which are available in the House Library and on the Home Office website www.homeoffice.gov.uk

Emergency Calls

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what percentage of 999 calls received in London were considered unnecessary in each year since 1997. [16898]

Hazel Blears: The requested information is not collected centrally in the police statistics.

Environmental Sustainability

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made on his Department's Sustainable Development Strategy. [16194]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Officials have held meetings to discuss the content of the Home Office strategy and have drawn up a work schedule for publishing it by mid-December 2005.

General Almog

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when his Department was informed of the issuing by Bow Street magistrates of an arrest warrant against General Almog. [17026]

Hazel Blears: The Department was informed on Monday 12 September 2005 that an arrest warrant had been issued on Saturday 10 September 2005.

Group 4

Mr. Henderson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was spent by his Department and public bodies and agencies for which he is responsible on security contracts with Group 4 Securicor in 2004–05; and if he will list *(a)* the nature and location of services provided and *(b)* the start and end dates of such contracts. [13521]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The total aggregate expenditure by the Department, its Executive agencies and non-departmental public bodies (NDPB's) on security contracts directly with Group 4 Securicor during the financial year 2004–05 was £90,826,000. Details of the nature and location of the services provided and the start and end dates of the current contracts that the expenditure relates to are provided in the following table. Group 4 Securicor also provide services to the Youth Justice Board as an operating sub-contractor at Oakhill Secure Training Centre Milton Keynes. The contract is held by STC (Milton Keynes) Ltd. Contracts have also been placed with fully owned operating subsidiary companies of Group 4 Securicor. One is for the provision of security guards at PSDB from November 2003 until October 2006 and Securicor (now G4S Justice Services Ltd.) provided an approved overseas escort service for Immigration and Nationality Directorate during 2004–05.

Services provided	*Location*	*Spend (£)*	*Contract start date*	*Contract end date*
HM Prison Parc	Bridgend, South Wales	31,190,000	4 January 1996	3 January 2021
Electronic Monitoring	Northern	47,670,000	28 January 1999	30 April 2005
Prisoner escorts	Metropolitan area, London	11,966,000	27 June 1994	28 August 2004

Gypsies/Travellers

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the *(a)* documents and *(b)* guidance that his Department has published relating to Gypsies and Travellers since 1997. [17498]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 12 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 483W, detailing the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's publications on Gypsies and Travellers,

Jury Trial

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on consultation undertaken regarding the appropriateness of jury trial for all cases. [16472]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Criminal Justice Act 2003 makes provision for trial by a judge sitting without a jury in serious or complex fraud cases, and in cases of jury tampering. Before that legislation was introduced, the White Paper "Justice for All", published in July 2002, invited views on the proposal that it should be possible for a court to order non-jury trial in such circumstances. There has been no consultation about the appropriateness of jury trial in the generality of cases, since no further reform is contemplated.

Laptop Computers

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many laptop computers have been used by *(a)* Ministers, *(b)* special advisers and *(c)* officials in his Department in each year since 1995; how many have been (i) lost and (ii) stolen in that period; what the cost was of the use of laptops in that period; and if he will make a statement. [4120]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Information on the issue of laptop computers by year is not held centrally and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost. Records on the issue and costs of laptops also date back only to 2001 when the Home Office took on Sirius (Fujitsu Alcedo Ltd.) as its service provider.

Since 2001 only two laptops have been issued to Ministers and only six have been issued to special advisers. A total of 3,192 laptop computers have been issued to officials in the core Home Office. With regards to the loss and theft of laptop computers, in 1995 and 1996 no laptops were reported lost. In 1997 four were reported lost and in 1998 two were reported lost. Since 1998 no reports have been made for the loss of a laptop.

On the number of laptops reported stolen there were seven reports in 1995, nine reports in 1996 and 1997, one report in 1998, three in 1999 and 18 in 2000. Between the end of 2000 and 2003 there were 39 thefts of laptops reported and since 2003 there have been a further 19 thefts reported.

The costs of laptops used since 2001 are as follows:

	£
1 April 2001	283,152.85
1 April 2002	150,029.22
1 April 2003	216,672.21
1 April 2004	168,111.83
1 April 2005	283,671.23

Management Consultants

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his Department's total spending on management consultants has been in each of the last three years. [13135]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information available for the financial year 2004–05 from the interrogation of the Adelphi Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system accounts payable module indicates the cost of external consultants to the department was £46.9 million.

The information available for the financial year 2003–04 from interrogation of the Business and Accounting Strategic System (BASS), indicates that the cost of external consultants to the department in 2003–04 was £106.8 million.

We do not hold information on the Department's total expenditure on management consultants for 2002–03 and to obtain this information would incur disproportionate cost.

The Department awards contracts in open competition according to the EU procurement regulations, based on best value for money. The use of external consultants in the Home Office provides the Department with specialist knowledge, skill, capacity and technical expertise that is not otherwise available in house.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the total expenditure saved in each of the last three years as a result of implementing recommendations by management consultancies within his Department. [13631]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department does not hold information in a form that would enable this question to be answered without incurring disproportionate cost

Offences Against the Person Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what the tariff range of sentence for those convicted under *(a)* section 18 and *(b)* section 20 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 is; [1218]

(2) what the average sentence given for people convicted under *(a)* section 18 and *(b)* section 20 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 was in each year since 2000 in (i) Essex and (ii) England. [1221]

Fiona Mactaggart: The maximum sentence under Section 18 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 is life imprisonment and under Section 20, five years. The following table shows the average custodial sentence length imposed for these offences (excluding those sentenced to life imprisonment) in both Essex and England for the years 2000 to 2003. Statistics for 2004 are due for publication in the autumn of 2005.

Average sentence (in months) given for people convicted under Section 18 and under Section 20 of the Offences against the Person Act 1861 in Essex and in England, 2000–2003[1]

	Section 18 offences		*Section 20 offences*	
	Essex[2]	*England*[2]	*Essex*[3]	*England*[3]
2000	46.7	45.0	17.4	15.7
2001	54.3	48.4	19.9	16.2
2002	51.6	47.3	17.5	17.3
2003	67.6	50.7	19.3	17.8

[1] Excludes those sentenced to life imprisonment.
[2] Tariff range (maximum): life imprisonment.
[3] Tariff range (maximum): 5 years imprisonment.

Olympic Games

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the implications are of the award of the 2012 Olympic games to London for the *(a)* workload and *(b)* staffing levels of his Department. [11674]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Secretary is responsible for overseeing the security preparations for the 2012 Olympic games. This task will be taken forward as a high priority and the appropriate level of staffing and other resources will be allocated to the task. It is not possible to be more specific at this early stage.

Prison Sentences

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of prison sentences handed down in *(a)* 1992, *(b)* 1997, *(c)* 2001 and *(d)* 2004 were for (i) six months or less, (ii) three months or less and (iii) five weeks or less; and if he will make a statement. [16370]

Fiona Mactaggart: The proportion of prison sentences handed down in *(a)* 1992, *(b)* 1997, *(c)* 2001 and *(d)* 2003, for (i) six months or less, (ii) three months or less and (iii) five weeks or less, is shown in the following table.

Proportion of those sentenced to custody given sentence lengths in specific ranges, 1992–2003 England and Wales

Percentage

Sentence band	*1992*	*1997*	*2001*	*2003*
Six months or less	55.6	61.0	65.8	65.2
Three months or less	33.5	37.4	38.5	37.9
Five weeks or less	11.0	11.3	12.8	13.2

Notes:

1. The shorter sentence length groups are subsets of the longer sentence groups. For example, in 2003 the 13.2 per cent. who received a custodial sentence length of five weeks or less are included in the 37.9 per cent. who received a sentence of three months or less.

2. The data for 2004 is unpublished and therefore not included. This data will be available from 27 October 2005.

Prisons

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance has been given by the prison service on the control, management and treatment of prisoners with severe personality disorders for which there is no medical treatment; and what financial arrangements exist to fund this aspect of prison management. [16966]

Fiona Mactaggart: The framework for the development of assessment and treatment services for dangerous offenders with severe personality disorders (the DSPD programme) in prison and NHS secure hospital settings, is set out in two planning and delivery guides. These guides, collectively, cover high and medium secure services, as well as community services. They have been developed in consultation with the staff involved in delivering these pilot intervention programmes and are readily available to staff, prisoners or patients, and their representatives.

The prison element of this programme is funded by dedicated funds from the Home Office.

Proceeds of Crime

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total amount of criminal assets recovered in *(a)* Northumbria and *(b)* England and Wales was in each year since the initiative to recover such assets was put in place. [17194]

Hazel Blears: Information is not available in the form requested. The total value of assets recovered by all agencies under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and earlier legislation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland was £54.5 million in 2003–04 and £84.4 million in 2004–05. The total value of cash forfeiture orders and confiscation orders obtained by Northumbria police was £691,770 in 2003–04 and £909,645 in 2004–05.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much money has been seized as a result of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 in each year since its commencement, broken down by *(a)* constituency, *(b)* London borough and *(c)* police authority; and if he will make a statement. [17015]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* Information is not available in the form requested. The total value of assets recovered by all agencies under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and earlier legislation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland was £54.5 million in 2003–04 and £84.4 million in 2004–05. The total value of cash forfeiture orders and confiscation orders obtained by each police force in England and Wales in 2003–04 and 2004–05 is set out in the table. Information for 2005–06 is still being validated. Assets recovered in a year do not necessarily relate to orders obtained in the same year.

Total value of cash forfeitures and confiscation orders obtained by police forces in England and Wales

£

Force	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Avon and Somerset constabulary	594,347.00	1,959,930.23
Bedfordshire police	3,392,094.53	154,828.69
British Transport police	156,471.60	281,376.94
Cambridgeshire constabulary	278,679.84	2,695,434.41
Cheshire constabulary	250,263.36	541,557.19
City of London police	1,200,282.09	2,211,123.08
Cleveland police	19,140.04	230,220.07
Cumbria constabulary	120,917.41	1,124,156.05
Derbyshire constabulary	71,140.10	2,540,453.70
Devon and Cornwall constabulary	192,616.60	1,182,881.95
Dorset police	147,532.10	1,050,401.06
Durham constabulary	235,600.50	477,399.45
Dyfed-Powys police	121,750.34	201,061.20
Essex police	0.00	192,804.57
Gloucestershire constabulary	930,442.19	390,469.23
Greater Manchester police	2,798,966.37	3,453,431.70
Gwent police	52,140.42	442,673.90
Hampshire constabulary	298,447.77	333,792.86
Hertfordshire constabulary	929,368.00	440,353.93
Humberside police	826,661.75	255,656.67
Kent police	1,210,503.91	1,926,936.62
Lancashire constabulary	120,953.30	3,743,146.94
Leicestershire constabulary	1,087,417.48	891,588.29
Lincolnshire police	143,411.38	307,912.23
Merseyside police	1,217,852.89	2,908,711.21
Metropolitan police service	5,950,410.55	26,426,648.39
National Crime Squad	5,991,570.46	11,940,373.79
Norfolk constabulary	89,325.89	911,868.06
North Wales police	89,522.03	109,758.12
North Yorkshire police	0.00	205,081.94
Northamptonshire police	556,066.08	1,063,417.47
Northumbria police	691,770.20	909,645.62
Nottinghamshire police	875,434.60	1,336,612.41
South Wales police	75,637.44	400,577.52
South Yorkshire police	784,579.88	1,330,077.48
Staffordshire police	373,784.34	260,405.82
Suffolk constabulary	137,649.75	430,715.69
Surrey police	1,480,550.62	648,947.84
Sussex police	652,221.26	1,002,181.72
Thames Valley police	1,182,132.20	750,663.61
Warwickshire police	83,116.50	57,357.29
West Mercia constabulary	1,180,461.28	999,467.06
West Midlands police	819,117.30	2,053,433.63
West Yorkshire police	2,874,164.65	2,265,457.57
Wiltshire constabulary	39,848.45	482,559.71
Total	40,324,364.45	83,523,552.91

Rape

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* investigations into and *(b)* successful prosecutions for rape in London there were in each year since 1997. [16903]

Paul Goggins: Data on the number of investigations is not centrally collected. The number of offenders found guilty at all courts for rape in London between 1997 and 2003 are contained in the following table.

Statistics for 2004 will be available in the autumn.

Offenders found guilty at all courts for rape in London[1] 1997 to 2003[2,3]

	Number
1997	116
1998	111
1999	103
2000	112
2001	89
2002	119
2003	132

[1] Includes Metropolitan Police and City of London police force areas

[2] These data are on the principal offence basis.

[3] Rape includes: rape of a female and male.

Source:

RDS—Office for Criminal Justice Reform, Home Office.

Russell Commission

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost was of the Russell Commission report; and if he will make a statement. [17003]

Paul Goggins: The cost of producing the Russell Commission report was £330,051. This includes communication costs, consultation exercises and events, the writing and printing of the report, launch activity and the management of the Commission's Youth Advisory Board.

The Russell Commission reported in March 2005 with a headline recommendation of the creation of a dedicated implementation body, which will take the lead in delivering a new framework for youth action and engagement. The Home Office Active Communities Directorate has created a small implementation team to take forward the Commission's recommendations. This team will work closely with other Government Departments, the private sector and voluntary sector on a number of activities between now and March 2006, at which point the dedicated implementation body will be launched.

Sexual Offences

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government are taking to tackle sexual offences. [16725]

Paul Goggins: The Government give high priority to tackling sexual offending because of the nature and extent of the harm caused to victims.

We have improved the care available to victims by extending and developing the network of sexual assault referral centres and supporting complementary community-based services for the victims of sexual crime, allocating £4 million from the victims fund over 2004–05 and 2005–06 for this purpose.

Building on what is known to be effective in meeting the needs of victims of sexual violence, the Department of Health and the Home Office are working together on a programme aimed at equipping health care services and professionals to identify and respond more effectively to victims of sexual and domestic violence and abuse by mapping existing services and developing national service guidelines.

We are committed to bringing more sexual offenders to justice. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 redefined and increased the penalties for many sexual offences and clarified the law on consent. We are encouraging more victims to report sexual crime and specially trained police officers and prosecutors have been established to deal with rape cases. At court, we have introduced a range of measures to facilitate the giving of evidence by victims.

The Government are particularly determined to ensure abuse of children is tackled rigorously and works with the police and other agencies, including those working in the internet industry, to develop policies and practice to minimise the risk of children being sexually abused. We are also establishing a new centre which will target paedophiles using the internet to distribute illegal images of children and to groom them.

Following the Bichard enquiry, wide-ranging action has been implemented, including developing consistent standards and working practices between police services, requiring much more effective joined-up working between different agencies and establishing training for head teachers and governors to help them screen out people applying for jobs working with children who may pose a risk.

We have developed the way that the police, probation service and others work together to ensure that decisions about managing known sex offenders are based on the best information available. In addition, there are also tighter requirements for known sex offenders to notify their whereabouts to the police and any plans they have to travel abroad. Based on evidence about what really works in reducing offending, intensive programmes are being run both in prison and the community (for sex offenders).

Terrorism

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in how many cases suspects detained under the Terrorism Act 2000 (Schedule 8 as amended by section 306 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003) have been released due to there being insufficient time to analyse *(a)* computer hard drives and *(b)* telephone records. [16734]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Office does not hold details of individual cases. This information would only be held by individual police forces.

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been *(a)* detained, *(b)* released and *(c)* charged within the first seven days of arrest under the Terrorism Act 2000 (Schedule 8, as amended by section 306 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003) broken down by (i) year, (ii) gender, (iii) ethnicity and (iv) religion. [16742]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The maximum period of detention pre-charge was extended to 14 days with effect from 20 January 2004. From that date to 4 September

2005 357 people were arrested, 321 of these were charged, released or otherwise dealt with within seven days. More detailed information is not held centrally.

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in how many cases suspects detained under the Terrorism Act 2000 (Schedule 8, as amended by section 306 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003) have been released due to there being insufficient time to decrypt heavily-encrypted computer data. [16744]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Office does not hold details of individual cases, the information would only be held by individual police forces.

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been detained for more than seven days under the Terrorism Act 2000 (Schedule 8, as amended by section 306 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003). [16745]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The maximum period of detention pre-charge was extended to 14 days with effect from 20 January 2004. Between 20 January 2004 and 4 September 2005, 357 people were arrested of whom 36 have been held for in excess of seven days.

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations he has received on the likely impact of the draft Terrorism Bill on civil liberties; and what response he has made. [16921]

Hazel Blears: Since the draft clauses of Terrorism Bill were published on 15 September a number of individuals and organisations have written to my right hon. Friend, the Home Secretary. My right hon. Friend has signed a statement under Section 19(A) of the Human Rights Act 1998 stating that in his opinion the Terrorism Bill is compatible with the Convention rights.

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research his Department undertook in relation to the draft Terrorism Bill on the merits of extending the period permissible before charge to allow more time to analyse documentation. [16922]

Hazel Blears: We have consulted extensively with the police, Crown Prosecution Service and security and intelligence agencies. On 6 October, my right hon. Friend, the Home Secretary, published a letter from the Metropolitan Police outlining the operational imperative for extending the maximum duration for which terrorist suspects could be detained.

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the compatibility of *(a)* sections one to three, *(b)* sections 17 and 18, *(c)* section 19 and *(d)* section 20 of the draft Terrorism Bill with the European Convention of Human Rights. [16924]

Hazel Blears: My right hon. Friend, the Home Secretary, has signed a statement under Section 19(A) of the Human Rights Act 1998 stating that in his opinion the Terrorism Bill is compatible with the Convention rights.

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* arrests, *(b)* charges and *(c)* convictions were made for terrorist-related offences after a warrant had been executed under (i) the Terrorism Act 2000 and (ii) the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001. [16735]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Details of arrests under the Terrorism Act 2000 are published on the Home Office website www.homeoffice.gov.uk/security/terrorism-and-the-law/terrorism-act/. There are no arrest powers under the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001. To answer the other parts of the question would require details of individual cases which are not held by the Home Office.

Timber

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the refurbishment projects that *(a)* are in progress and *(b)* that will start in the next six months; what action is being taken to ensure that these will procure timber from legal and sustainable sources; and whether guidance will be issued to contractors on each of these projects to ensure that the timber used on site during refurbishment also comes from legal and sustainable sources. [16316]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Department's Refurbishment projects are listed in the following tables.

The Home Office uses a standard timber procurement contract clause when tendering for construction and refurbishment projects. This stipulates that timber used in those projects must be from legal and sustainable sources. This includes timber used in performing the contracts.

Refurbishment projects currently in progress over £1 million in value[1]

Agency/Area	*Project Details*
IND	Lunar House Restack
UKPS	Liverpool Relocation
IPCC	3 Regional Offices
Home Office	1 Bedborough Gardens
NPD	Humberside Probation Area
NPD	Nottinghamshire NPS
NPD	Peninsula House Suffolk
HMPS	Canterbury—Visits/Education
HMPS	Dartmoor—Electrical Upgrade
HMPS	Downview—Multi Purpose Building
HMPS	Everthorpe—Ancillary Works
HMPS	Everthorpe—Houseblock Enabling Works
HMPS	Gartree—B Wing Modernisation
HMPS	Highdown Rewire
HMPS	Holloway—Replace Cell Windows
HMPS	Leeds—Upgrade Electrical Infrastructure
HMPS	Maidstone—Upgrade Perimeter Security
HMPS	National Privacy Screen Programme
HMPS	Norwich—Health Care Unit
HMPS	Pentonville—Electrical Infrastructure Upgrade
HMPS	Portland—Refurb of E-Hall, Raleigh, Drake and Benbow W Wings
HMPS	Preston—Re-Roof and C Wing
HMPS	Swansea—D Wing Replace Stone Cladding
HMPS	Wakefield—A Wing and Programme Units
HMPS	Wandsworth—CPIG
HMPS	Wandsworth—In-Cell Electrics
HMPS	Wealstun—Replace Accommodation Blocks
HMPS	Wellingborough—External Works and New Kitchen
HMPS	Wymott—Ancillaries to House Block
HMYOI	Onley—Phase Two Upgrade
HMYOI	Swinfen Hall Ancillaries

[1] Information based on a reporting date of 31 July 2005

HMPS Refurbishment projects in progress less than £1 million in value

HMPS Establishment	Project Details
All High Security	Replace Biometrics—On Site
Blundeston	Re-Roofing—On Site
Brockhill	National Gate Security Upgrade—On Site
Castington	Re-Roofing—On Site
Castington	Substance Misuse Unit—Procurement
Channings Wood	Re-Roofing—On Site
Channings Wood	Upgarde PID5—On Site
Chelmsford	Re-Roofing—On Site
Dover	Circulation Road and Casements Stability Repairs—On Site
Downview	Re-Roof A and B Wings, Laundry, Education and RAPT Building—On Site
Edmunds Hill	RTU Ancillaries—PH Two—On Site
Everthorpe	Temporary Kitchen—On Site
Feltham	Replace Generators—On Site
Foston Hall	CP1G—On Site
Frankland	Approach Alarms—On Site
Frankland	Re-Roofing—Phase One—Let
Gloucester	Replace General Alarm System—On Site
Headquarters	Lift Refurbishment Abell And Cleland—Design
High Down	Re—Roof Gatelodge and Rainwater Goods—On Site
Hollesley Bay	In Cell Electrics—On Site
Holloway	Replace Generators—On Site
Holme House	Repairs to Perimeter Wall—On Site
Leicester	In Cell Electrics—On Site
Leyhill	Re-Roof Store, Chapel and Cit Building—On Site
Lindholme	Re-Roofing Lockstore and Works to Lockstore Office—On Site
Liverpool	Re-Roof Main Centre—On Site
Long Lartin	Additional Anti Helicopter Wires—On Site
Long Lartin	Replace Water Main—On Site
Maidstone	Re-Roof Weald Wing—On Site
Morton Hall	Connection to Mains Sewage—On Site
Onley	Flooring and Decoration B, C, D and E Wings—On Site
Pentonville	In Cell Electrics—D Wing—On Site
Portland	Repair Cit and Officers Mess Roofs—Let
Ranby	RTU Ancillaries Completion Works—On Site
Reading	Emergency Legionella Precautions Works—Design
Shrewsbury	Repairs to C Wing and Kitchen Block Roofs—Let
Stafford	CP1G—On site
Standford Hill	Repair Roof Atrium to A and B Wings—On Site
Swaleside	Re-Roofing Phase Two—On Site
Swansea	Re-Roof Admin Building—On Site
Wetherby	Substance Misuse Unit—On Site
Whatton	Replace General Alarms—On Site
Winchester	In Cell Electrics and Cell Call System—On Site
Wormwood Scrubs	Perimeter Wall—On Site

Refurbishment projects that will start in the next six months over £1 million in value[1]

Agency/Area	Project Details
IND	Lunar House Lifts
Centrex	Rytoe—Aston/Graham En-Suites
NPD	Merseyside Probation Area
NPD	Reading Replacement
HMPS	Birmingham—Decentralise Boiler House
HMPS	Brockhill—Healthcare and Detox
HMPS	Full Sutton—Phase One Switchgear and Boilers
HMPS	Liverpool Health Care Unit
HMPS	Lincoln—A Wing Refurbishment

[1] Information based on a reporting date of 31 July 2005

Refurbishment projects that will start in the next six months under £1 million in value[1]

HMPS Establishment	Project Details
Acklington	Replace Cell Call System—Design
Brinsford	Substance Misuse Unit—Design
Bristol	Re-Roof D Wing—Design
Canterbury	Replace Roof to Multi-Skills, Chapel and CES—Design
Channings Wood	Replace Kitchen Flooring—Design

Refurbishment projects that will start in the next six months under £1 million in value[1]

HMPS Establishment	Project Details
Edmunds Hill	Re-Role Female to Cat C Male—Design
Exeter	Replacement Water Main—Let
Featherstone	Renew Cold Water Supply Network—Design
Feltham	Substance Misuse Unit—Design
Glen Parva	Catering Academy Development Option A Main Kitchen only—Procurement
Gloucester	Re-Roof Works Department—Design
Guys Marsh	Re-Roof Shared Services Building—Design
Guys Marsh	Sewer Requisition and Repairs to Existing Drainage—Procurement
Guys Marsh	National Gate Security Upgrade—Let
Guys Marsh	Upgrade Electrical Supply—Design
Guys Marsh	Mezzanine Floor to New Workshop—Design
Hewell Grange	Silage and Manure Store—Procurement
Hindley	Substance Misuse Unit—Procurement
Huntercombe	Substance Misuse Unit—Design
Kirkham	Ductile Gas main—Design
Kirklevington	Replace Generator—Design
Lancaster	A Wing Roof Repairs QMU and BOV Roofs—Design
Lancaster Farms	Substance Misuse Unit—Procurement
Leeds	Renew Fire Main—Design
Liverpool	Remedial Work to H Wing Showers—Design
Liverpool	National Gate Security Upgrade—Procurement
Long Lartin	Upgrade Night Sanitation System—Design
Long Lartin	CP1G Fire Requirements—Design
Low Newton	Re-Roofing—A, B and HCC—Procurement
Mount	Remedial Works to Existing Surface Water Balancing Pond—Design
Northallerton	Replace General Alarms—Let
Onley	Re-Role Works—Design
Preston	Replace Emergency Generator—Design
Preston	HES2 Additional Works—Design
Stoke Heath	Substance Misuse Unit—Design
Sudbury	Replace Water Tanks and Potable Water Cisterns—Design
Warren Hill	Substance Misuse Unit—Design
Warren Hill	Standby Generator—Procurement
Wayland	Re-Roofing—Procurement
Werrington	Substance Misuse Unit—Design
Winchester	Separate Entrances—Design
Winchester	Re-Roof Officers Mess/Guymer Unit—Design

[1] Information based on a reporting date of 31 July 2005

Watermark Project

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the sites in his Department which are included in the Watermark project. [16202]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Watermark Project was drawn to a conclusion over two years ago. The Prison Service joined the scheme in 2000 and were followed a year later by a further 27 key sites on the Home Office estate, comprising 62 per cent. of the core Home Office estate. The sites that participated between 2000 and 2003 are listed as follows.

Abell House
Apollo House
Bedford Point
Cleland House
Clive House
Crown House
Emergency Planning College, Hawkhills
Forensic Science Service, Chepstow
Forensic Science Service, Huntingdon
Forensic Science Service Priory House, Birmingham
Forensic Science Service, Wetherby
Grenadier House

Home Office Scientific and Development Branch Langhurst and Sandridge
Horseferry House
Immigration Service Status Park one, two, three and four
Lunar House
National Police Training Centre, Ashford
National Police Training Centre, Bruche
National Police Training Centre, Cwmbran
National Police Training Centre, Harrogate
National Police Training Centre Ryton, Coventry
Olympia House, Newport
Queen Anne's Gate
Quest House
Whitgift Centre, Blocks A, B, C, E
Her Majesty's Prisons
Acklington/Castington
Albany
Askham Grange
Ashwell
Bedford
Blakenhurst
Belmarsh
Birmingham
Blantyre House
Blundeston
Bristol
Brixton
Buckley Hall
Bullingdon
Bullwood Hall
Camphill
Canterbury
Cardiff
Charming Wood
Chelmsford
Coldingley
Cookham Wood
Dartmoor
Doncaster
Dorchester
Downview
Durham
East Sutton Park
Eastwood Park
Erlestoke
Everthorpe
Featherstone
Feltham
Ford
Foston Hall
Frankland
Full Sutton
Garth
Gartree
Gloucester
Kirkham
Kirklevington Grange
Lancaster
Latchmere House
Leeds
Leicester
Lewes
Leyhill
Lowdham Grange
Maidstone
Manchester
Moorland
Morton Hall
New Hall
North Sea Camp
Norwich
Nottingham
Parc
Parkhurst
Pentonville
Portland
Portsmouth Kingston
Prescoed
Preston
Ranby
Risley
Rochester
Send
Shepton Mallet
Shrewsbury
Stafford
Standford Hill
Styal
Sudbury
Swaleside/Elmley
Swansea
The Mount
The Verne Portland
Usk
Wakefield

West Mercia Police

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much West Mercia police has received from his Department's rural policing fund. [17095]

Hazel Blears: West Mercia police authority has received a total of £12.8 million from the rural policing fund since its introduction in 2000–01.

Wheel Clamping

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the regulation and licensing of the wheel clamping industry. [17007]

Hazel Blears: When the vehicle immobiliser (wheel-clamper) regulations were implemented on 3 May 2005, the Home Office and the SIA ensured they were consistent with the recommendations of the better regulation taskforce, in that they were proportionate, accountable, consistent, transparent and targeted.

As at 5 October 2005, 3,303 application forms for vehicle immobiliser licences have been requested from the SIA. 1,700 individuals have successfully completed the required training and are registered on the SIA's qualification database (QDB). 1,135 applications have been submitted and accepted for processing. 940 licences have been issued, and 75 have been refused.

Young Offenders

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the merits of promoting sporting participation as a way of reducing crime among young offenders; and if he will make a statement. [16881]

Fiona Mactaggart: Sport based activities are one of the key interventions delivered through the Youth Inclusion Programmes and Positive Activities for Young People and are part of the Government's wide package of measures to target and steer young people most at risk of crime and reduce their re-offending. Sport is also an important part of the Youth Justice Board's Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme. Evaluation shows this as one of the elements that is the most effective at reducing reoffending.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Departmental Stationery

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what percentage of *(a)* copying paper and *(b)* paper for printed publications used by the Department in (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [17906]

James Purnell: The information requested is as follows:

(a) 2003–04—100 per cent.; 2004–05—100 per cent.

(b) All the Department's printed materials during 2003–04 and 2004–05 were produced on Revive Silk or Revive Matt. Revive Silk contains 75 per cent. de ink post consumer waste, the balance being mill waste. Revive matt contains 100 per cent. de ink post consumer waste. Both papers exceed the targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what measures she has put in place to ensure that her Department meets the targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content; and by what date this target will be achieved. [17907]

James Purnell: The Department has been procuring 100 per cent. recycled paper since 1997, this is in line with DEFRA's targets. Paper purchased conforms with ISO 14001 which is 100 per cent. post consumer re-cycled content.

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what measures she has put in place to ensure that her Department meets the targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste; and by what date this target will be achieved. [17908]

James Purnell: The Department for Culture Media and Sport exceeds the targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs as the paper it uses for its printed publications contains a minimum of 75 per cent. de-ink post-consumer waste, the balance being mill waste.

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports; in each case stating (i) the name of each paper used and (ii) the recycled and post-consumer recycled content of each paper. [17910]

James Purnell: The information is as follows:

(a) Evolve supplied by Howard Smith Ltd.

(b) Astron (MP jackets)

Howard Smith Ltd. (paper)

Lyreco (miscellaneous stationery)

Banner Business (Government folders)

(c) Lyreco

(d) Howard Smith Ltd. (one paper used only)

(i) Evolve copier paper

(ii) 100 per cent.

Digital Television

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people have switched from analogue to digital television services in each year since 1999. [18328]

James Purnell: Great progress has been made. 63 per cent. of households are now estimated to have digital television.

Please visit the Ofcom website (http://www.ofcom.org.uk/research/cm/cm05/tv.pdf) for digital penetration in each year since 1999.

Gambling Act

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the timetable is for the publication of *(a)* secondary legislation and *(b)* guidance in relation to the Gambling Act 2005. [18053]

Mr. Caborn: We plan to bring the Gambling Act 2005 fully into force with effect from September 2007.

The first two commencement orders were made at the end of August 2005. These brought into force on 1 October 2005 the provisions of the Act formally creating the Gambling Commission; and, giving effect to parliamentary commitments to abolish the 24-hour membership rule in respect of casino and bingo halls, and to increase the number of jackpot machines allowed in a casino to 20.

My Department has been considering the remaining subordinate legislation needed to complete the process of implementation and the timetable for that legislation. We propose to publish details shortly.

It is the responsibility of the Gambling Commission to issue guidance to licensing authorities. The commission plan to consult on its draft guidance in December 2005 and issue final guidance from May 2006.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans the Government have to change the number of *(a)* small, *(b)* large and *(c)* regional casino licences to be allowed under the Gambling Act 2005. [18190]

Mr. Caborn: The Gambling Act 2005 initially allows for one regional casino, eight large casinos and eight small casinos, and we are proceeding with the implementation of the Act on that basis.

The Government have made it clear that it wishes to take a cautious approach to the development of new casinos until it has been possible fully to assess the impact of their introduction on problem gambling. We have not ruled out the possibility of asking Parliament in the future to agree to a larger number of regional casinos, if further evidence is needed for the purposes of making a more reliable assessment.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate *(a)* her Department, *(b)* the Gambling Commission and *(c)* the Gaming Board have made of the anticipated average floor size of the whole licensed premises, including non-gambling uses, of (i) small, (ii) large and (iii) regional casinos. [18192]

Mr. Caborn: Under Section 7(5) of the Gambling Act 2005, the Secretary of State is required to make regulations by reference to which any casino may be classified as a regional, large or small casino. By virtue of Section 7(6)*(d)*, these regulations may make provision by reference to the floor area used or designated for a specified purpose. In the Government's response to the first report of the joint committee on the draft Gambling Bill, we set out the minimum floor areas that would apply to the different categories of casino. This information is set out in the table. We have made no estimate of the likely average floor sizes of the new casinos.

Square metres

Licence category	*Minimum table gaming area*	*Minimum additional gambling area*	*Minimum non-gambling area*	*Minimum total customer area*
Small	500	0	250	750
Large	1,000	0	500	1,500
Regional	1,000	2,500	1,500	5,000

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what estimate the Government has made of the change in the number of adult gaming centres as a consequence of the Gambling Act 2005; [18196]

(2) what changes the Government has made to controls on *(a)* the number, *(b)* the needs test for new premises and *(c)* maximum prizes allowed for adult gaming centres under its gambling reforms. [18197]

Mr. Caborn: The Gambling Act 2005 creates a specific regulatory regime for adult gaming centres for the first time.

This will clearly distinguish adult gaming centres, which children will be prohibited from entering, from other premises like seaside arcades (termed family entertainment centres in the Act) which children will be permitted to enter. Adult gaming centres will be subject to the full requirements for operating, premises and personal licences introduced by the new Act, and operators will need to comply with new requirements relating to social responsibility or risk losing their licence.

No estimate has been made of the number of arcades likely to apply for adult gaming centre licences under the new Act. However, the Gambling Commission estimates that a total of 1,750 arcades will apply either for adult gaming centre licences or for family entertainment centre licences. A Regulatory Impact Assessment of the Gambling Act was published on 21 April 2005. It concluded that the gaming machine reforms in the Act would increase competition between adult gaming centres and other venues offering machine gambling, including casinos, bingo halls, licensed betting offices and members' clubs.

Arcades are not subject to any control on numbers or a needs test under the existing legislation. Currently, all arcades are permitted to offer gaming machines with a maximum prize of £25. When the 2005 Act is implemented, adult gaming centres will additionally be able to offer up to four gaming machines with a maximum prize of £500.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what role the English regional chambers will play in the allocation of casino licences under the Gambling Act 2005. [18198]

Mr. Caborn: We have established an independent Casino Advisory Panel to advise the Secretary of State on the exercise of her powers under Section 175(4) of the Gambling Act 2005 to specify which local authorities may issue the new casino premises licences created by the Act.

The Advisory Panel will invite the English regional chambers, in their role as regional planning bodies, to identify a list of broad locations for the one regional casino permitted by the Act, emerging from their work on the regional spatial strategies.

Licensing

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make it her policy to return the responsibility for the issue of licences for the sale of alcoholic beverages to magistrates; and if she will make a statement. [17151]

James Purnell: The Government have no intention of returning responsibility for the issue of licences for the sale of alcohol to magistrates. Indeed, the 24 November marks the full implementation of the new licensing regime, including the transfer of the bulk of alcohol licensing matters to the licensing authorities.

The new regime is an enhancement of the former arrangements providing elected councillors with the power to resolve disputes, taking into account the views of local residents and against a back drop where the licensing objectives on crime and disorder, nuisance, public safety and the protection of children from harm, are paramount consideration at all times.

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received requesting a review of the proposed changes in the licensing laws; what response she has made; and if she will make a statement. [17524]

James Purnell: My Department has received many representations on this subject, both in favour of the changes introduced by the Licensing Act 2003, and requesting a review of the new framework.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and I are satisfied that the Act provides a balanced package of freedoms and safeguards which will bring considerable benefits. The Act integrates six existing licensing regimes into one. It creates a system that enables local communities to influence licensing decisions and provides a more effective range of sanctions to be used against badly run premises. And over time the changes will provide the law abiding majority with a more diverse choice about how they spend their leisure time.

As with any major reform, the Government are committed to monitoring and evaluating the impact of the changes e.g. Sir Les Elton's Independent Fees Review Panel is about to publish it's interim findings, and following full implementation of the reforms on 24 November, there will be an early review of the statutory guidance in consultation with all stakeholders.

London Bombings

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the impact of the London bombings of 7 and 21 July 2005 on tourism in *(a)* London and *(b)* England; and if she will make a statement. [16882]

James Purnell: I met representatives of the London and UK tourism sector on 12 July and 6 October 2005. I have also received regular updates on work to assess the economic effects of the bombings, and on recovery work, through the VisitBritain-led Tourism Industry Emergency Response Group.

The Group commissioned work from Oxford economic forecasting following 22 July 2005, the results of which project the financial effects of the bombings as follows:

(a) the turnover of the London tourism industry is projected to be £500 million lower than previously expected; and

(b) total tourism revenues across the UK are projected to be £750 million lower than previously expected (separate figures for England were not produced).

Although there has been a downturn in domestic tourists visiting London, the visitor economy in both the UK and London is still expected to grow by the end of 2005. Overseas visitor arrivals are expected to grow by 6 per cent. in London with spending likely to increase by 8 per cent. with the United States market remaining particularly strong.

My Department and its partner organisations in the private and public sectors continue to monitor the situation closely.

London Olympics

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what she estimates the additional levy on London council tax bills to fund the Olympics will be; and what the proposed *(a)* commencement date and *(b)* end date is. [15214]

Tessa Jowell: The Mayor has advised that he will raise up to £625 million towards investment in regeneration, infrastructure and facilities necessary to stage the Olympics through council tax, beginning in 2006–07. This is expected to raise £550 million within 10 years and a further £75 million within another two years, if required, and will equate to a £20 a year or 38p a week addition to B and D bills.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of the revenue to be generated each year from additional levy to be charged on London council tax bills to fund the Olympics. [15215]

Tessa Jowell: It is anticipated that London council tax would generate £55 million per year for 10 years, and, if required, a further £75 million over the subsequent two years, towards investment in regeneration, infrastructure and facilities necessary to stage the Olympics.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the transport infrastructure needs associated with hosting the 2012 Olympic Games; and if she will make a statement. [15823]

Tessa Jowell: In preparing the Olympic bid, London 2012 and Transport for London carried out detailed assessments of Olympic transport needs and capacity. The Government were fully involved in this process. Details of provision and proposals for Olympic transport infrastructure can be found in chapter 14 of the candidature file, which was presented to the International Olympic Committee in November 2004. This information can also be found at http://www.london2012.org/NR/rdonlyres/C27233BA-E663-4FD8-8EC8-A7896B547EFD/0/Theme_14_transport.pdf

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport for how many years the Olympics council tax supplement will be levied on London council tax bills; and what the estimated supplement is per capita for each year of operation. [17384]

Tessa Jowell: Under the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government and the Mayor of London (Command Paper CM5867 laid before the House in June 2003) it is planned to raise up to £625 million towards investment in regeneration, infrastructure and facilities necessary to stage the Olympics through council tax, beginning in 2006–07. It is planned to raise £550 million within 10 years, and a further £75 million within another two years if required. This is expected to equate to a £20 a year or 38p a week addition to band D bills.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much is planned to be raised from the Olympics council tax supplement on London council tax payers. [17387]

Tessa Jowell: It is planned that the London council tax will raise up to £625 million towards investment in regeneration, infrastructure and facilities necessary to stage the Olympics. This is part of the overall public funding package that is set out in the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government and the Mayor of London (Command Paper CM5867 laid before the House in June 2003.)

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what weight will be given to the environmental record of prospective bidders in determining tenders for work in connection with the London Olympics 2012. [17666]

Tessa Jowell: "The Procurement Principles", recently published by the interim Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA), recognise the need to maximise the potential to improve the environment in East London and minimise adverse environmental impact of the Games and legacy development. The Procurement Strategy, currently being developed by the interim ODA, will specifically address this important issue.

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the likely impact of the 2012 Olympic Games on the Tooting constituency; and if she will make a statement. [18116]

Mr. Caborn: The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will bring significant sporting, social and economic benefits to London and the whole of the UK. The Games will inspire a new generation to greater sporting activity and will leave a fantastic legacy of state-of-the-art sporting facilities in London. Tooting residents will experience the unique opportunity of having the world's greatest sporting event nearby and there will be a range of opportunities to get involved in the Games, whether as an athlete, spectator or volunteer. The people of Tooting will also share in the significant improvements to London's transport infrastructure and the community will have the opportunity to participate in the four-year cultural festival that will accompany the Games.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what commitments she has made in respect of Government funding to support delivery of the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics games. [18171]

Tessa Jowell: The Government funding commitments remain as stated in the candidature file and as presented to the IOC in Singapore this July.

National Lottery

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much the national lottery operator has paid to the National Lottery Commission in licence fees in each year since 1994. [18877]

Mr. Caborn: Licence fees paid to the National Lottery Commission since 1994 are:

	Amount (£)
1994–95	110,000
1995–96	260,000
1996–97	340,000
1997–98	400,000
1998–99	380,000
1999–2000	480,000
2000–01	620,000
2001–02	544,000
2002–03	820,000
2003–04	428,000
2004–05	316,000

National Sports Foundation

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what arrangements have been put in place for *(a)* the For Sport Consortia, *(b)* the British Olympic Association and *(c)* other sports to receive funding from the National Sports Foundation. [15633]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 10 October 2005]:* No arrangements are in place yet. Discussions on how National Sports Foundation funding will be distributed are ongoing and decisions will be taken in due course.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport who will chair the National Sports Foundation; and what the senior management structure will be. [15635]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 10 October 2005]:* Discussions on the structure of the National Sports Foundation are ongoing and decisions will be taken in due course.

Test Cricket

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will put cricket test matches on the A-list of sporting events. [17091]

James Purnell: No. Cricket test matches played in England are on the list of events which must be offered to the main free-to-air broadcasters, but only for secondary coverage such as highlights.

The decision to end protection of full live coverage was made in 1998 in the light of the recommendations of the independent review undertaken by the advisory group chaired by Lord Gordon of Strathblane.

Income from broadcasting forms 80 per cent. of cricket's income and the increased income since 1998 has allowed the ECB to invest substantial amounts in programmes for grass roots cricket and central contracts for England players, which have helped to contribute to the current success of the England team.

However, this time round, if the ECB had been prevented from considering bids from subscription broadcasters, competition for the rights would have been very limited and the ECB have told me that this would have led to a loss in income of around £80 million, which would have been disastrous for the game.

The Secretary of State has made it clear that the Government will need to review the list of protected events as digital television take-up increases and viewers have a wider range of options for watching sport. This will provide the opportunity to re-consider the listing of live test cricket. However, this will not affect the 2006–09 contract.

TV Licences

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will reduce the television licence fee for students sharing accommodation in halls of residence; and if she will make a statement.

James Purnell: In the BBC Charter Review Green Paper published in March this year, the Government indicated that it believes the current scope of television licence fee concessions is about right, but undertook to re-examine any anomalies in the existing concessionary arrangements. We shall announce our conclusions in a White Paper which we intend to publish towards the end of this year.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) how much has been spent on advertising and promotion of television licences in each of the last five years for which records are available; [18330]

(2) what the cost of employing *(a)* enforcement officers and *(b)* detector vans to enforce non-payment of television licences was in the last year for which figures are available. [18332]

James Purnell: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has incurred no such expenditure. The BBC has responsibility for the administration and enforcement of the television licensing system and TV Licensing carries out the day-to-day administration and enforcement under contract to the Corporation. I have therefore asked the BBC's Head of Revenue Management to consider the questions raised by the hon. Member and to write to him direct. Copies of the reply will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

TREASURY

Air Miles

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many air miles were accrued through ministerial travel in his Department in 2004–05, broken down by Minister; how many were *(a)* foregone and *(b)* donated to charity, broken down by charity; and whether air miles accrued by officials were required to be (i) foregone and (ii) given to charity. [17323]

John Healey: The information on the number of air miles accrued and their application could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Ministerial travel is conducted in accordance with the "Ministerial Code" and "Travel by Ministers". Guidance for Ministers on the use of air miles is set out in the Ministerial Code. The guidance makes clear that air miles should be used only for official purposes or else foregone. However, if it is impracticable to use the benefits for Government travel, there is no objection to Ministers donating them to charity if this is permissible under the terms of the airline's scheme and the charity is one chosen by the airline.

Similar rules are in place for officials.

Aviation Tax

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has examined the impact of *(a)* the aviation tax in the Netherlands and *(b)* aviation taxes elsewhere in his examination of the options for possible economic instruments for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. [17347]

John Healey: The Government are continuing to explore options for the use of economic instruments for tackling aviation's greenhouse gas emissions. As part of that process, the Government have noted the tax on domestic aviation fuel in the Netherlands, and the aviation taxes applied in other European member states and elsewhere.

Biofuels

Mike Penning: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to vary levels of excise duty on biofuels. [17084]

John Healey: In line with the commitment given in the Alternative Fuels Framework to give a three-year rolling guarantee on duty rates for alternative fuels, Budget 2005 confirmed that the 20 pence per litre duty differentials for both biodiesel and bioethanol will continue until 2007–08, providing further certainty and stability for development.

Climate Change Levy

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations he has received on the level of the climate change levy. [17361]

John Healey: The Chancellor receives many representations covering a wide range of issues including the rates of the climate change levy. These are given due consideration in the Budget process.

Controlled Oil

Pete Wishart: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many registered dealers of controlled oil there are in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* England and Wales and *(c)* Scotland; [17589]

(2) how many registered dealers of controlled oil have ceased trading since the start of the new HM Customs and Revenue scheme governing them; [17590]

(3) whether HM Revenue and Customs requires registered dealers of controlled oil to have IT systems specifically to deal with the scheme; and whether financial assistance is available for this expenditure; [17591]

(4) how much the new scheme to regulate registered dealers of controlled oil has cost to date; and what its forecast costs are in each of the next five years; [17592]

(5) what mechanisms are in place to monitor the effectiveness of the new scheme to control registered dealers of controlled oil. [17593]

John Healey: There are 4,723 registrations under the registered dealers in controlled oil (RDCO) scheme in the UK, of which 3,771 are in England and Wales, and 307 in Scotland. Since the start of the scheme, 398 dealers have ceased trading.

Registered dealers in controlled oil must keep revenue records and accounts of controlled oil that they have received and supplied, and provide details to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) monthly. These records and accounts need not be held on a computer, and HMRC does not provide financial assistance to traders wishing to buy IT systems.

The UK oils strategy, of which the RDCO scheme is an important part, received £95.9 million in funding at its launch, in April 2002, for the period 2002–03 to 2005–06. Of that figure, £341,000 was spent on the development of computer systems to handle RDCO data, but more detailed costs for the implementation and administration of the scheme are not available, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Forecast costs for future years are not available

Analysis of RDCO returns allows HMRC to identify suspicious transactions without having to impose on traders more visits than necessary. HMRC also meets the legitimate trade to share intelligence on the oils market, including the effects of the RDCO scheme. As part of the wider oils strategy, the RDCO scheme has contributed significantly to the reduction in the UK market share held by illicit oils from 8 per cent. in 2000 to around 6 per cent. in 2003.

Financial Assistance Scheme

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has met the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions since May 2005 to discuss the Financial Assistance Scheme. [18638]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Chancellor meets the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on a regular basis to discuss a wide range of issues relating to the Government's welfare reform agenda.

Fiscal Deficit

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the level of fiscal deficit in the current financial year. [19253]

Mr. Gordon Brown: Following today's announcement by the Bank of England that Sir Andrew Large is to retire as Deputy Governor (Financial Stability), the Queen has been pleased to appoint, under the Bank of England Act 1998, Sir John Gieve to succeed him. This appointment will take effect in January 2006.

Budget 2005 set out the Government's forecasts for the public finances up until 2009–10. These showed that the Government are meeting their strict fiscal rules over the economic cycle. Updated economic and fiscal projections will be provided in the pre- Budget report later this year.

National Insurance

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will take steps to aggregate earnings where people are doing more than one job and earning less than the lower earnings limit for national insurance contribution purposes; and if he will make a statement. [18644]

Dawn Primarolo: Each employment is treated separately for national insurance contributions purposes. The aggregation of the earnings of people doing more than one job who are earning below the lower earnings limit, would therefore be administratively extremely complex for employers.

NHS Trusts

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the NHS trusts which owe sums in respect of PAYE and national insurance contributions relating to August or earlier to HM Revenue and Customs, indicating the amount by which each of these trusts is in arrears. [17957]

Dawn Primarolo: For reasons of confidentiality Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs are unable to comment on individual customers.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total sum outstanding from NHS trusts to HM Revenue and Customs is in respect of PAYE and national insurance contributions deducted which relate to August or earlier. [17958]

Dawn Primarolo: Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs monitors employers' performance at local level but does not collate information about particular categories of employer so the overall figures requested are not readily available.

Online Tax Collection

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what target time has been set by HM Revenue and Customs to process online tax returns for the main categories of taxpayers; and what the *(a)* average and *(b)* maximum time taken was in the latest period for which figures are available. [17664]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC do not have a specific target for processing online tax returns. For the vast majority of SA taxpayers who submit their returns online their return will be processed within 24 hours of them submitting it. However, on occasions (e.g. when maintenance work needs to be carried out on the system) this may extend to a few days. All SA taxpayers submitting their returns online get an electronic notification when their return has been received into the HMRC system. We do not hold information on the maximum time taken to process an online return.

Scottish Charity Title Unit

Mark Lazarowicz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what guidance his Department issues to the staff of the Scottish Charity Title Unit to assist them in determining whether a body can be deemed to be established for charitable purposes only; and whether this guidance is available to the public; [17753]

(2) what human resources his Department has allocated to the function of charity recognition in Scotland in each of the last five years, expressed as full-time equivalents and broken down by grade; [17754]

(3) what mechanism exists for *(a)* appeal and *(b)* review of applications that have been rejected by the Scottish Charity Title Unit; and how many such reviews have taken place in each of the last five years; [17755]

(4) how many applications for charity recognition the Scottish Charity Title Unit has received in each of the last five years; and how many of these *(a)* have been approved, *(b)* have been rejected and *(c)* are still pending; [17756]

(5) what the average length of time taken is from receipt of an initial set of documents by the Scottish Charity Title Unit in application for charity recognition to notification of approval or rejection; and how many applications are pending; [17757]

(6) what the most common reasons are for rejection of applications for charity recognition by HM Revenue and Customs Scottish Charity Title Unit. [17758]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: No formal guidance is issued to the staff of HM Revenue and Customs (Charities Title Group). Decisions on determining whether a body is charitable for tax purposes are made by reference to legal precedent and case law.

Over the past five years a team of five staff have handled the recognition of charities in Scotland for tax purposes.

Where HM Revenue and Customs determines that an applicant is not entitled to charitable tax reliefs, the applicants can appeal through the law courts. The outcome of any such appeal will form a legal precedent.

It is not possible to determine the number of applications received, as the available data does not relate exclusively to applications for charitable status. Statistics on approvals and rejection are only available from January 2003 and are reproduced in the following table:

Applications for charity recognition

	Approved	*Rejected*
2003	1,038	102
2004	1,122	123
2005 (January to 12 October)	653	82

It would not be cost-effective to identify the number of applications pending.

There are no statistics available for the average time taken from receipt of an application for recognition to notification of approval or rejection of that application. HM Revenue and Customs responds to first-time applications in an average of 27 days. In most cases additional information is required before a decision can be made on whether the application is approved or rejected. It is not possible to identify the total number of applications pending.

If an application is rejected it will be because the objects as expressed, or the underlying activities are nor exclusively charitable and/or the application fails the public benefit test.

Self-Assessment Tax Returns

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the average cost of administering a self-assessment tax return in the latest year for which figures are available. [18629]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC's estimate of the cost of administering self-assessment is set out in the NAO report: Filing of Income Tax Self Assessment Returns (published 20 June). Paragraph 4.2 shows the direct costs of administering the return for 2002–03 as £220 million or an average of £22 per return issued. The cost for 2003–04 increased marginally to £223 million reflecting increased customer support, the average cost per return issued remains £22.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many UK PAYE taxpayers receive a notice of coding from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs but do not receive a self-assessment return. [17965]

Dawn Primarolo: For the tax year 2004–05 it is estimated that some 11.7 million taxpayers received a notice of coding but were not issued a tax return.

Stamp Duty

Adam Price: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the difficulties experienced by solicitors and homeowners with the scanning of stamp duty land tax forms at Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. [17237]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Following concerns from the Law Society that a percentage of land transaction returns were rejected because of scanning errors, HMRC agreed to carry out in-depth research into the issue of forms SDLT8 (requests for further information relating to incomplete or incorrectly completed returns). This suggested that in approximately 5 per cent. of cases received, one or more fields were either not captured or were misinterpreted during the scanning process. This figure includes returns where the handwriting results in information being captured incorrectly.

As a result of this review, HMRC identified a number of modifications which would quickly reduce the percentage of cases in which there is a scanning error. All of the recommendations from the report have now been implemented. As a result of these changes we estimate that about 1 per cent. of cases will now have SDLT8s issued because of scanning issues. HMRC are continuing to work with the Law Society and other stakeholders in order to further reduce these incidents.

Virtually all of these exceptions arise because of handwriting quality. The report can be found on HMRC's website at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/so/sdlt8.htm.

Since 26 August 2005, it has been possible to file SDLT returns on-line directly into the SDLT automated system. Using this service removes the need to use post, and (because of the in-built checks) has a very high probability of returns being correct first time. If complete information is supplied, on-line filing produces an instant acknowledgement that the return has been accepted. HMRC is working with representative bodies to encourage the use of the service.

Tax Credits

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people are in receipt of child tax credit. [17166]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates of the number of in-work families with tax credits for 2003–04 awards, based on final family circumstances and incomes for 2003–04, appear in the HMRC statistical publication "Child and Working Tax Credit Statistics: 2003–04". More recent provisional estimates for in-work families, as at selected dates in 2004–05 appear in the publication "Child and Working Tax Credit Statistics: Provisional Awards at Snapshot Dates". The estimates are based on samples and are subject to significant sampling uncertainty. These publications can be found on the HMRC website at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/cwtc-quarterly-stats.htm.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost to the Treasury of administering child tax credit was in each year since it was established. [17168]

Dawn Primarolo: The cost of managing and paying the child and working tax credits in the financial year 2003–04 appear in note 3 to the Trust Statement in the Inland Revenue Annual Report and Accounts for 2003–04. The same costs for the financial year 2004–05 appear in note 3 to the Trust Statement in the Inland Revenue Annual Report and Accounts for 2004–05. Figures for 2005–06 will not be available until the Trust Statement for that year is released.

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the extent of in-year tax credit overpayment in Scotland, broken down by *(a)* parliamentary constituency and *(b)* local authority. [16880]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates for 2003–04 of the numbers of in-work families with tax credits awards, including information on overpayments and underpayments by constituency and local authority, based on final family circumstances and incomes for 2003–04 are published in "Child and Working Tax Credits. Finalised Awards. 2003–04 Geographical Analysis." This publication is available on the HMRC website at: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/cwtc-geog-stats.htm.

Information on the number of in-year adjustments to tax credit awards is not available.

Mr. Burns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit claimants there have been in the parliamentary constituency of West Chelmsford since the current scheme began, broken down by those *(a)* underpaid, *(b)* overpaid and *(c)* paid the correct amount. [17298]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given to the hon. Member for Mid-Bedfordshire (Mrs. Dorries) on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 321W.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in how many cases the automatic recovery of tax credit overpayment has been suspended while a dispute between the claimant and HM Revenue and Customs is being investigated; and when the new IT procedure that allowed this suspension came into effect. [17205]

Dawn Primarolo: As HMRC officials said to the Treasury Sub-Committee of the House on 12 October 2005, the intention is to introduce a new fully automated computer function designed to suspend recovery of disputed overpayments. This will, however, require quite significant reform to the existing IT system. Effective interim procedures that will enable the suspension of recovery in all disputed cases are taking time to develop and will be introduced as soon as possible.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Access to Treatment

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what intermediate goals his Department has set to judge its progress in contributing to the G8's commitment to achieving as close as possible to universal access to treatment for all those who need it by 2010; and if he will make a statement. [16564]

Mr. Thomas: In line with the commitments made both at G8 summit at Gleneagles and the Millennium Review summit, the UK acting as G8 Presidency has taken active steps to progress work with the international community, in particular the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS),

> "to develop and implement a package for HIV prevention, treatment and care, with the aim of as close as possible to universal access to treatment for all those who need it by 2010".

On September 2, the UK (acting as G8 president) called an informal meeting attended by members of the G8, developing countries, civil society, UNAIDS, the WHO, the World Bank, and UNICEF to address next steps. This resulted in a strong and shared commitment to joint action and to move this forward, recognising that efforts to meet these must:

- be country-owned and country-led;
- develop a package which balances treatment, prevention and care—a comprehensive response is essential to achieve this ambitious goal;
- situate actions to achieve Universal Access in wider efforts to eradicate poverty, including strengthening health services;
- involve all key players: civil society, private sector, donors and affected countries.

UNAIDS has been asked to develop a process and set intermediate targets to mobilise action at country level and to address any blockages at global level (for example on questions of drug pricing and procurement). They expect to establish a taskforce, building on the work of the Global Task Team on AIDS Co-ordination among Multilateral Institutions and International Donors (GTT). The taskforce is expected to comprise of high-level representatives of UN member states (donors and developing countries), multilateral institutions, research institutions, the private sector and civil society groups, including people with HIV. UNAIDS will be asked to report on steps taken and action required to meet on these commitments at the UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS in 2006.

European Development Fund

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on his policy towards linking good governance with the distribution of financing available under the 9th European Development Fund. [16071]

Mr. Thomas: Commitments to good governance underpin the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP)—European Union (EU) Partnership Agreement (known as the 'Cotonou Agreement').

Resources under the 9th European Development Fund (EDF) were allocated on the basis of country needs and performance. The latter includes Government actions in institutional reform and accountability, democratic freedoms, and macro-economic and sectoral policy. The mid-term and end-of-term reviews of country strategies provide the opportunity to adjust these allocations, taking account of new needs and performance.

Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, democratic principles, the rule of law and measures to fight corruption are "essential" or "fundamental" elements of the Cotonou Agreement, and are the subject of regular dialogue between the EU and partner countries. Where concerns arise, measures are identified to resolve the issue.

The Government believe the quality of institutions of governance is crucial to reducing poverty, safeguarding basic rights and ensuring the appropriate use of development funds. We fully support a regular and comprehensive dialogue on these issues.

Hurricane Katrina

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance his Department has given the United States following Hurricane Katrina; and if he will make a statement. [16897]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development (DFID) responded by sending 2,900 blankets, specifically requested by the US Government, which were transported free of charge by an aircraft donated by Airbus International that also carried French supplies.

The value of this support is about £10,000. DFID also seconded an expert to help coordinate donations by other EU countries. Separately, the Ministry of Defence delivered around 482,000 ration packs.

St. Helena

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list consultancy companies which the Department has used in drawing up tourism strategies for the Island of St. Helena. [17020]

Hilary Benn: DFID has used the consultancy company listed as follows in drawing up tourism strategies for the Island of St. Helena:

Consultant

Edward Kelly

Project Title

Consultancy to Update the St Helena Tourism Strategy

United Nations

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when the Government *(a)* made representations to and *(b)* held discussions with (i) counterparts in other UN member states and (ii) at UN meetings in respect of the future plans and management of the (1) UN Emergency Fund and (2) UN Office for Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs; and what proposals the UK put forward on these occasions. [18874]

Hilary Benn: Since I set out my proposals for reform of the international humanitarian system in December last year, DFID Ministers and senior officials have talked to a number of other UN member states, in particular about the development of a revised and expanded UN Central Emergency Revolving Fund (CERF). I attended the UN Millennium Review summit in September, and spoke at a humanitarian reform event at which Sweden, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Luxembourg announced contributions to the revised CERF totalling US$60 million, in addition to previously announced Norwegian and UK contributions of US$30 million and US$70 million respectively.

At a Good Humanitarian Donorship meeting with a number of donors on 5 October in Geneva, chaired by DFID, a range of humanitarian reform proposals were discussed, including the role that the UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) should play in them. On 6 October, a meeting of the OCHA Donor Support Group was held, chaired by the US, at which the leading donors to OCHA (including the UK) discussed OCHA's future workplans, priorities and challenges with senior OCHA officials. The UK provides financial support to OCHA to improve its performance in planning and co-ordination of humanitarian responses, with emphasis on protection of vulnerable populations, and disaster management and risk reduction initiatives.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Disabled Access

Dr. Cable: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission whether the doorknobs in Portcullis House have been assessed as compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. [17833]

Nick Harvey: The design of Portcullis House complied with all statutory requirements when built, including the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. I am aware that some users find the doorknobs in Portcullis House difficult to operate. The Parliamentary Estates Directorate are engaged in discussions with Michael Hopkins Architects to identify a satisfactory solution.

Mail Screening

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what the cost of screening mail outside the parliamentary estate was in the last period for which

figures are available; what the cost of internal screening was in the latest comparable period; and what turn-round time was built into the new contract. [17710]

Nick Harvey: The cost of screening mail outside the parliamentary estate for the month of September 2005 was some £100,000. Mail screening has not been performed internally since 1996 and therefore no comparable figures are available. Rather than specify turn around time, the screening contract requires a percentage of the mail to be available on each of the three daily deliveries in conjunction with the mail services contract. The target of making between 60 per cent. and 80 per cent. of mail available for the first internal delivery at 8am is by and large being met despite teething problems.

Portcullis House

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what the cost has been of providing a window cleaning service in Portcullis House in each year since its construction. [17338]

Nick Harvey: Until 2003, the component costs of cleaning windows in Portcullis House were not separately identified by the contractor and could be calculated only at disproportionate cost. Since August 2003, when the present contract was let to MITIE, the cost of cleaning internal and external windows including the atrium roof has been £115,000 per annum.

Security

Harry Cohen: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what action is being taken in response to the recent discovery of a non-passholder in an unauthorised location, the details of which have been communicated to him; and if he will make a statement. [18599]

Nick Harvey: The Commission is not responsible for the enforcement of the rules governing access to the estate, which is the responsibility of the Serjeant at Arms acting under the authority of Mr. Speaker.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Africa

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the aid promised to Africa at the G8 summit will be used for the purposes for which it is intended. [16087]

Hilary Benn: I have been asked to reply.

The G8 agreed that additional resources will be focused on low income countries that are committed to growth and poverty reduction, to democratic, accountable and transparent government and to sound financial management. Where this is the case, it should be up to the country concerned to decide how best to use the resources to accelerate progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which are focused on reducing poverty, improving people's access to education, health, water and sanitation.

In March 2005, the Department for International Development published a policy paper explaining our approach in more detail, 'Partnerships for Poverty Reduction: Rethinking Conditionally'. This states that an effective aid partnership should be based on a shared commitment to: reducing poverty and achieving the MDGs; respecting human rights and other international obligations; and strengthening financial management and accountability, to reduce the risk of funds being misused through weak administration or corruption. We will consider reducing or interrupting aid if partner governments deviate significantly from any of the three objectives. However we will try to strengthen countries' leadership of their own development by not making our aid conditional on specific policy decisions by partner governments. Our assessment of progress will be based on mutually agreed benchmarks, drawn wherever possible from national plans. The assessment will focus on overall impact, rather than specific policies.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British embassies have closed in Africa in the last 12 months. [17440]

Mr. Straw: I refer the hon. Member to my written statement of 11 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 21–23WS. In the last 12 months, the FCO has closed the British embassy in Antananarivo, Madagascar. The British High Commissions in Maseru, Lesotho, and in Mbabane, Swaziland, were also closed in this period.

Burma

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what steps he is taking to stop human rights violations taking place in Burma; [18206]

(2) what steps he is taking to bring the Burmese regime to justice for human rights violations. [18207]

Ian Pearson: The Government have strongly criticised the Burmese regime's abuses of human rights. The UK works closely with international partners to press for improvements to human rights in Burma and fully supports the efforts of the United Nations Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Burma, Professor Sergio Pinheiro. Human rights violations have been highlighted by successive highly critical UK co-sponsored UN Resolutions on Burma, most recently at the UN Commission on Human Rights in April. We also support the efforts of the International Labour Organisation to end the use of forced labour. The EU has repeatedly condemned Burma's lack of progress on this issue.

There is currently no international tribunal with jurisdiction over Burma. Furthermore, we note that the National League for Democracy Central Executive Committee wrote on 27 December 2004 to Senior General Than Shwe proposing that "past deeds should be deleted", i.e. the slate should be wiped clean.

Committee of the Regions

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the process is for agreeing nominations to the Committee of the Regions; and whether the Government will reflect proportionality between the UK's political parties in its nominations. [18317]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The current Committee of the Regions (CoR) members' term of office ends on 25 January 2006, and member states need to submit their candidates for the new term by 28 October 2005. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has overall responsibility for ensuring that the UK is adequately represented in the CoR, and he therefore wrote in June to my right hon. Friends the Deputy Prime Minister (John Prescott) and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Peter Hain), and to the First Ministers for Scotland (Jack McConnell) and Wales (Rhodri Morgan), asking for their nominations by 30 September. All have now replied with the names of their candidates, after consulting local government bodies, and political parties, in accordance with established procedure. The next step will be for the Foreign Secretary and my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister to approve the nominations. One of the factors which the Foreign Secretary takes into account when deciding whether or not to approve the nominations is the political balance of the UK delegation.

Embassies/High Commissions

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what further plans he has *(a)* to close, *(b)* to contract and *(c)* to expand embassies and high commissions. [18876]

Mr. Straw: I set out details of planned closure and localisation of British embassies and high commissions and other posts in my written ministerial statement of 11 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 21–24WS.

EU Travel Bans

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list individuals subject to an EU travel ban whom he has met over the last three years. [16662]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: EU travel bans prevent listed individuals from travelling to the EU, except in the case of specified exemptions set out in the EU Common Position on Zimbabwe. The UK meets its obligations fully in upholding these travel bans, which it believes are an effective measure in applying pressure against regimes which have particularly poor records on human rights, democracy, good governance and the rule of law.

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has of course not met any listed individuals in the EU in contravention of these travel bans. Nor has he had meetings with such individuals outside the EU.

At international meetings, such as those at the UN, British Ministers come into contact with representatives of foreign governments whatever our views of them, including those subject to EU travel bans. In the past, the Foreign Secretary has briefly come into contact with Zimbabwean President Mugabe, former Zimbabwean Foreign Minister Stan Mudenge and current Zimbabwean Foreign Minister Mumbengegwi at the UN General Assembly in New York.

The Foreign Secretary also occasionally met Foreign Minister Mumbengegwi in the course of normal diplomatic business in Mumbengegwi's previous role as ambassador to the UK, before his inclusion on the travel ban in 2005.

Extraordinary Rendition

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he received a letter from Martin Scheinin, a rapporteur for the UN Commission on Human Rights, regarding alleged British involvement in extraordinary rendition; and if he will place a copy of his response in the Library. [17841]

Ian Pearson: The Government have not received a letter from Professor Martin Scheinin, the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Terrorism, on the specific subject of extraordinary rendition. We have received two letters from Professor Scheinin seeking information on counter-terrorism measures employed or proposed by the Government. The Home Office is dealing with both letters and will respond. We will then co-ordinate with them and Professor Scheinin to see if copies of the Government's responses to him can be placed in the Library of the House. I will let my hon. Friend know if and when this can be done.

Hong Kong

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 12th July 2005, *Official Report*, column 872W, on Sir Donald Tsang, whether Sir Donald Tsang *(a)* has asked the Department not to use his title and *(b)* informed the Department that he does not wish to be known by it. [17712]

Ian Pearson: Hong Kong Chief Executive Donald Tsang has not asked the Foreign and Commonwealth Office not to use his title. Donald Tsang chooses not to use his title in his official capacity, and in official correspondence the Chief Executive is referred to as The Honourable Donald Tsang. We therefore respect this evident preference.

Iraq

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what formal representations have been made to the Government of Iraq concerning possible Iranian support for insurgents operating against Iraqi security forces and UK troops in Southern Iraq. [18484]

Dr. Howells: We have been speaking to the Iraqi Transitional Government on a regular basis about this issue since the summer of 2005. On 1 August 2005 our Ambassador to Iraq made formal representation to the Iraqi Defence Minister, Sadoun Dulime, concerning possible Iranian support for insurgents in Southern Iraq.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received from Iraqi officials

concerning possible Iranian involvement in the insurgency in Iraq; and on what date he received those representations. [18585]

Dr. Howells: We have not received formal representation from Iraqi Officials concerning possible Iranian involvement in the insurgency in Iraq.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what date his officials in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* London were first informed of reports that (i) Iranian and (ii) Hizbullah personnel were training insurgents operating in southern Iraq. [18586]

Dr. Howells: We first became aware in early summer 2005 of reports suggesting that military equipment originating in Iran may have been used against British soldiers in Southern Iraq.

Israel

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the UK Government's position is on whether the recent Israeli air strikes on Gaza and the resumption of targeted assassinations constitute a proportionate response to the rocket attacks that were launched by Palestinian militants in the days following Gaza disengagement. [17919]

Dr. Howells: The Government's consistent policy is that as long as it acts within international law, Israel has the right to protect its citizens from terrorist attacks which we condemn absolutely. Targeted killings are contrary to international law.

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of *(a)* the legality of Israel's E1 plan outside Jerusalem and *(b)* its implications for progress with the Road Map. [18302]

Dr. Howells: The plan to expand the Israeli settlement of Ma'aleh Adumim into the so-called "E1" area east of Jerusalem, combined with the proposed route of the barrier, threatens to complete the encircling of the city by settlements and cut off Palestinian East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank. This would have serious economic, social and humanitarian consequences for Palestinians who live in these areas.

These Israeli actions are in violation of Israel's Roadmap obligations and international law. If they continue, they will make it harder to reach a final status agreement on Jerusalem. We and others in the international community have made our concerns on this clear to the Government of Israel.

Krishna Maharaj

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made on behalf of Krishna Maharaj; and if he will make a statement. [17099]

Ian Pearson: Mr. Maharaj's case is currently before the US Federal Court of Appeals. In January 2005, the Government submitted an amicus curiae brief to the Court of Appeals in relation to lack of consular notification. We continue to monitor the case in consultation with Mr. Maharaj's legal representatives in the US and UK.

Peru

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has received on the progress of judicial reform in Peru, with particular reference to the case of *(a)* Augusto Camacho Alarcon and *(b)* Carlos Jose Garay; and if he will make a statement. [16838]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Our ambassador in Lima discussed judicial reform with the Peruvian Justice Minister on 19 September. The ambassador received representations from the Justice Minister on the Progress of judicial reform in Peru. Our ambassador emphasised the strong support the UK and the EU have given to judicial reform in Peru. Under our EU Presidency, the embassy has chaired meetings of EU Heads of Mission to discuss EU projects on judicial reform in Peru.

We have not received representations on the cases of Augusto Camacho Alarcon and Carlos Jose Garay. However, we understand that the Peruvian National Terrorism Court has ordered that Alarcon and Garay be re-tried under terrorism charges. We also understand that these individuals have been released from custody and are currently awaiting their re-trial.

Ricin Investigations

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he received the report from Porton Down regarding the analysis of substances believed to be ricin found during investigations in 2003 which concluded that no ricin was present; and when he informed the United States Government of this conclusion. [16482]

Dr. Howells: The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, Porton Down did not send the report of these tests to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Royal Navy Patrol Boats

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he expects the Iranian Government to return the three Royal Navy patrol boats seized in 2004. [18483]

Dr. Howells: We have pressed the Iranian authorities on many occasions to return the Royal Navy boats and equipment which they have held since June 2004. Our discussions continue.

Tibetan Students (China)

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Chinese Government have cancelled the passport of any student from Tibet granted a chemistry scholarship by his Department. [17568]

Ian Pearson: The issue of passports to Chinese nationals is a matter for the Chinese Government. The UK Government are not in a position to know whether the Chinese Government have cancelled a passport unless it is specifically brought to our attention.

Turkey

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what acknowledgement has been *(a)* sought from and *(b)* made by the government of Turkey, in connection with the accession of that country to the EU, of the responsibility of that country or its predecessor for the Armenian genocide. [17895]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There is no consensus among EU member states that the massacres of 1915–16 should be categorised as genocide as defined by the 1948 UN Convention on Genocide and there is no reference to the issue in the Negotiating Framework agreed by EU member states that will guide Turkey's accession negotiations. The Turkish government does not accept that there was any intention or act that constituted genocide.

We welcomed open discussion of this and related matters at a recent conference in Istanbul, and the Turkish Foreign Minister's statement to that conference expressing hope that research into the era could improve relations between Turkey and Armenia. It was also welcome that, on 9 March, the Turkish Prime Minister and the leader of the main opposition party called for an impartial investigation into the 'genocide' allegations by Turkish and Armenian historians under the supervision of an international organisation such as the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation. The Armenian President, however, rejected the proposal on the grounds that establishing diplomatic relations was a necessary prior step.

Volunteering

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many volunteering positions his Department has offered in each of the last five years. [17873]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not hold this information centrally. To collate it would incur disproportionate costs.

West Papua

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of human rights abuses in West Papua. [17238]

Ian Pearson: We are concerned about reports of human rights abuses in Papua, and we raise these regularly with the Government of Indonesia, We also encourage the Indonesian Government to engage in dialogue with Papuan representatives and to proceed with full implementation of the Special Autonomy legislation.

We are encouraged by President Yudhoyono's recent statements that his Government wishes to solve the issue in Papua through dialogue,

"in a peaceful, just and dignified manner".

NORTHERN IRELAND

Autism

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to provide a Province-wide autism strategy. [18423]

Mr. Woodward: Policy and services for children and adults with autism are currently being examined under the Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability (N.I.). The review will recommend how future service delivery should be organised.

Big Lottery Fund

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people work in the Big Lottery Fund for Northern Ireland. [18098]

Mr. Hanson: A total of 55 full-time equivalents are currently employed in the Big Lottery Fund's Belfast office.

Breast Screening

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to his Answer of 4 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 191W, on breast screening, what percentage of women *(a)* with a disability and *(b)* from ethnic minority backgrounds received breast screening in each of the last five years in each health board area. [17516]

Mr. Woodward: Data on the uptake of breast screening specifically relating to the number of women with a disability or from ethnic minority backgrounds is not routinely collected.

Cervical Screening

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the percentage uptake rate was for cervical screening among women in each health board area in each of the last five years; and what the percentage was for women *(a)* from ethnic minority backgrounds and *(b)* with a disability. [17517]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested on the first part of this question is as set out in the table.

	As at March each year				
	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
EHSSB	66.17	66.99	69.17	69.16	68.01
NHSSB	74.34	74.96	76.97	77.14	75.98
SHSSB	71.24	72.54	74.48	74.47	73.91
WHSSB	67.65	67.98	69.66	68.71	68.92

The present system of recording uptake rates does not allow for the collection of data relating to either ethnicity or disability.

Classrooms (Road Noise)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what guidelines are set for the maximum level of background road noise in *(a)* classrooms and *(b)* classrooms in schools with special needs. [18224]

Angela E. Smith: At present there are no specific guidelines in Northern Ireland that set the maximum level of background road noise in classrooms.

However, when considering acoustics in schools, the Department of Education and school authorities currently follow the guidance in Building Bulletin 87, "Guidelines for Environmental Design in Schools", issued by the Department for Education and Skills, which states the following:

"Each room or other space in a school building shall have the acoustic conditions and the insulation against disturbance by noise, appropriate to its normal use."

Criminal Prosecutions

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what percentage of criminal prosecutions in Northern Ireland resulted in a conviction in each of the past 10 years. [18248]

Mr. Hanson: The following table outlines the number of criminal prosecutions in Northern Ireland and the number and percentage of subsequent convictions for the years 1994 to 2003. Data for 2004 will not be available until early 2006.

	Number of prosecutions	*Number of convictions*	*Percentage convicted and sentenced*
1994	38,884	34,216	88
1995	37,908	32,972	87
1996	36,016	30,676	85
1997	35,599	30,964	87
1998	31,127	26,881	86
1999	30,439	26,524	87
2000	30,492	26,618	87
2001	28,563	24,350	85
2002	28,044	24,100	86
2003	30,937	26,675	86

Crosshill Quarry

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what legislation was in place to control hazardous waste at Crosshill Quarry, Crumlin in the period from 25 November 2003 to 19 December 2003; and if he will make a statement. [15179]

Angela E. Smith: The Special Waste Regulations (NI) 1998 were in place during the period from 25 November 2003 to the 19 December 2003 to control Special Waste movements to and from Crosshill Quarry. During this period however, no hazardous waste was introduced to the quarry. The Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 and relevant statutory provisions made under that Order are in place to protect persons at work within the quarry site.

Electroconvulsive Therapy

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many individuals have been treated with electroconvulsive therapy in the Province in each of the last 10 years. [17132]

Mr. Woodward: The total number of patients who received electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) in each financial year 1994–95 to 2004–05 is provided in the following table.

Total number of patients who have received electroconvulsive therapy

	Number of patients who received ECT
1994–95	1,039
1995–96	1,081
1996–97	936
1997–98	876
1998–99	808
1999–2000	717
2000–01	629
2001–02	659
2002–03	662
2003–04	624
2004–05	472

Note:
Data are collected on a quarterly basis and include both new patients and patients who received ECT previously. Therefore patients may be included in the table more than once over the year if they received ECT in a previous quarter.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what measures are used in Northern Ireland hospitals to establish consent from a patient for electroconvulsive therapy. [17559]

Mr. Woodward: A standard consent form is used to obtain consent from patients. When a patient is unable to give consent, a second opinion is necessary from an independent doctor appointed by the Mental Health Commission before the procedure can proceed.

Fire Authority

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many new members have been appointed to the Fire Authority since May. [17539]

Mr. Woodward: None.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he expects the Fire Authority to be reconstituted. [17540]

Mr. Woodward: Under the proposed Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order, the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service Board would replace the Fire Authority for Northern Ireland as the governing body for the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.

A 12-week public consultation on the wording and effect of the Draft Order closed on 14 October 2005. Once the responses have been considered and the Draft Order has been finalised it will be laid at Westminster. It is anticipated that the order will be made at Privy Council around March 2006 and the provisions to establish the new board will be commenced as soon as practicable thereafter.

Firearm Certificates

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* firearm certificates were held, *(b)* new applications for firearm certificates

were granted and *(c)* firearm certificates were extinguished in each of the last five years in Northern Ireland. [18092]

Mr. Woodward: Statistics held by the Police Service of Northern Ireland's Firearms Licensing Branch are as follows:

	Total firearm certificates held	*New grants*	*Extinguished*
1999–2000	81,783	2,948	n/a
2000–01	80,809	2,632	n/a
2001–02	80,113	2,523	n/a
2002–03	79,223	2,682	n/a
2003–04	78,066	2,742	n/a
2004–05	n/a	n/a	n/a

n/a = not available

Statistics are not available for 2004–05.

Foster Care

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much a foster family in Belfast received for each child fostered in each of the last five years. [18099]

Mr. Woodward: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 258W.

General Practitioners

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many full-time general practitioners are employed in the Province; and how many there were *(a)* five and *(b)* 10 years ago. [17550]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is provided in the table.

Number of general practitioners (unrestricted principals) employed in NHS: currently, five years ago and 10 years ago

	Headcount	*WTE*[1]
1995	1,003	949
2000	1,053	983
2005	1,084	[2]n/a

[1] Whole time equivalent
[2] Not available

The increase in the number of full-time general practitioners for 1995–2000 is 34. The WTE figure for 2005 is not available.

Health Service Administrators

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many administrators were employed within the health service in Northern Ireland in the last year for which figures are available. [18022]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is provided in the table.

Number of administrators employed within the Northern Ireland HPSS as at 30 September 2005

	Administration and clerical grades
Headcount	13,237
Whole-time equivalent	11,572.97

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many administrators were employed within the health service in the Province in June 1997. [18186]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not available for June 1997. However, information as at 30 September 1997 is provided in the following table.

Number of administrators employed within the Northern Ireland HPSS as at 30 September 1997

	Headcount	*Whole time equivalent*
Administration and clerical grades	9,536	8,457.65

Health Service Costs

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the cost to the health service in the Province in the last 12 months of the failure by patients to return equipment loaned to them. [17130]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not available centrally.

Hospital Managers

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many managers within the Ulster Community and Hospitals Trust are *(a)* Protestant and *(b)* Roman Catholic. [17541]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is provided in the following table.

Number of managers within the Ulster Community and Hospitals Trust who are (a) Protestant and (b) Roman Catholic as at January 2005

Religion	*Headcount*
(a) Protestant	156
(b) Roman Catholic	45
Other/not known	15
Total	216

Hospital Treatments

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total number of hospital treatments was in Northern Ireland in 2001. [18025]

Mr. Woodward: Information is not available on the total number of hospital treatments undertaken in 2001. Information is available on the number of inpatient and day case procedures undertaken in acute hospitals in Northern Ireland in 2001.

In 2001 there were 523,957 procedures undertaken in acute hospitals in Northern Ireland.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many hospital treatments there were in Northern Ireland during the last 12 months. [18037]

Mr. Woodward: Information is not available on the total number of hospital treatments undertaken during the last 12 months. Information is available on the number of inpatient and day case procedures undertaken in acute hospitals in Northern Ireland in 2004–05.

In 2004–05 there were 589,321 procedures undertaken in acute hospitals in Northern Ireland.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total number of hospital treatments in the Province was in 1999. [18188]

Mr. Woodward: Information is not available on the total number of hospital treatments undertaken in 1999. Information is available on the number of inpatient and day case procedures undertaken in acute hospitals in Northern Ireland in 1999.

In 1999 there were 487,155 procedures undertaken in acute hospitals in Northern Ireland.

Hospital-acquired Infections

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many cases of *(a) Clostridium difficile* and *(b) Staphylococcus aureus* bacteraemia have been reported (i) at each hospital and (ii) within each health trust in the Province in each month of the last three years. [17542]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested, which is only available quarterly by hospital for *Clostridium difficile* and quarterly by trust for *Staphylococcus aureus*, is set out in the following tables.

(a) Clostridium difficile is only available from 1 January 2005 when surveillance became mandatory in Northern Ireland.

Hospital	*January–March 2005*	*April–June 2005*
Altnagelvin Hospital	15	36
Antrim Hospital	18	14
Belfast City Hospital	39	44
Belvoir Park Hospital	3	3
Causeway Hospital	11	19
Craigavon Area Hospital	57	41
Daisy Hill Hospital	7	8
Downe Hospital	4	5
Erne Hospital	2	1
Lagan Valley Hospital	3	8
Lurgan General Hospital	12	16
Mater Infirmorum Hospital	8	10
Mid Ulster Hospital	15	6
Musgrave Park Hospital	6	1
Royal Victoria Hospitals	33	26
South Tyrone Hospital	0	5
Tyrone County Hospital	3	2
Ulster Hospital	49	43
Whiteabbey Hospital	6	2

(b) Staphylococcus aureus is only available from July 2002.

	2002		*2003*			
Trust	*July–September*	*October–December*	*January–March*	*April–June*	*July–September*	*October–December*
Altnagelvin Hospital	6	7	8	7	8	13
Belfast City Hospital	23	30	28	32	26	34
Causeway	5	8	2	9	5	6
Craigavon Area Hospital Group	9	13	9	10	12	21
Down Lisburn	1	6	7	11	4	7
Green Park	3	1	4	1	6	2
Mater Infirmorum Hospital	4	10	11	8	11	10
Newry and Mourne	5	6	5	6	7	6
Royal Group of Hospitals	18	20	29	28	32	23
Sperrin Lakeland	12	6	11	5	9	9
Ulster Community and Hospitals	15	26	13	15	16	11
United Hospitals	19	20	25	35	23	29

	2004				*2005*	
	January–March	*April–June*	*July–September*	*October–December*	*January–March*	*April–June*[1]
Altnagelvin Hospital	14	15	8	11	11	15
Belfast City Hospital	35	14	26	17	26	35
Causeway	7	1	8	4	5	6
Craigavon Area Hospital Group	12	13	13	7	12	10
Down Lisburn	6	6	8	4	7	6
Green Park	3	1	4	2	2	3
Mater Infirmorum Hospital	8	7	1	7	8	16
Newry and Mourne	5	6	4	6	5	3
Royal Group of Hospitals	36	20	23	36	29	30
Sperrin Lakeland	10	7	16	4	7	6
Ulster Community and Hospitals	13	21	20	14	15	16
United Hospitals	31	24	25	17	21	14

[1] Provisional

Notes:
1. *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteraemia reporting became a mandatory requirement from 1 April 2002.
2. *Staphylococcus aureus* patient episodes' are defined as the total number of patients from whom blood culture set(s) collected during the quarter grew *Staphylococcus aureus*. If repeat specimens were collected from a single patient, and the patient was considered to have had two episodes of bacteraemia, then they should be counted as two patients. As an arbitrary measure, if positive blood culture sets are collected more than 14 days apart, they should be considered as reflecting different episodes.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many incidents of *(a)* hospital acquired and *(b)* other healthcare acquired infections there were in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [18039]

Mr. Woodward: This information is not available in the form requested.

Maritime Safety

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many emergency calls relating to people having difficulty at sea around the coastline of Northern Ireland there have been in each of the past three years. [18142]

Dr. Ladyman: I have been asked to reply.

The information is as follows.

Incidents dealt with as a result of an emergency call

	Number
2004	333
2003	336
2002	352

Medical Notes

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland at what locations, apart from hospitals, hospital medical notes are stored in Northern Ireland. [17115]

Mr. Woodward: Trusts in Northern Ireland use secure storage facilities in Mallusk and Lisburn for the storage of hospital medical notes off site.

Missed Appointments

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate the number of missed appointments at GP surgeries in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [17547]

Mr. Woodward: The Department does not hold information on missed appointments at GP surgeries. This could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Multiple Sclerosis

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many multiple sclerosis sufferers in the Province are waiting to commence treatment with beta interferon or glatiramer, broken down by health board. [17552]

Mr. Woodward: The number of multiple sclerosis patients in each Health and Social Services Board area waiting for beta interferon or glatiramer treatment at 30 September 2005 is as follows.

Health board	*Number waiting for beta interferon/glatiramer treatment at 30 September 2005*
Eastern	56
Northern	56
Southern	16
Western	19
NI total	147

Note:
Patients currently suspended from the waiting list are excluded from these figures.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many multiple sclerosis patients in the Province were waiting to commence treatment with beta interferon or glatiramer in each of the last five years. [17553]

Mr. Woodward: The number of multiple sclerosis patients in the Province waiting for beta interferon or glatiramer treatment in each of the last three years is displayed in the following table. Information prior to September 2003 is not readily available.

Date	*Number waiting for beta interferon/glatiramer treatment in Northern Ireland*
30 September 2003	103
30 September 2004	70
30 September 2005	147

Note:
Patients currently suspended from the waiting list are excluded from these figures.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many multiple sclerosis patients in the Province on the waiting list to commence treatment with beta interferon or glatiramer have been waiting for *(a)* less than six months, *(b)* six to 12 months, *(c)* 12 to 18 months, *(d)* 18 to 24 months, *(e)* 24 to 30 months and *(f)* more than 30 months. [17554]

Mr. Woodward: The number of multiple sclerosis patients in Northern Ireland waiting for beta interferon or glatiramer treatment at 30 September 2005 for *(a)* less than six months *(b)* six to 12 months *(c)* 12 to 18 months, *(d)* 18 to 24 months, *(e)* 24 to 30 months and *(f)* more than 30 months are shown in the table:

Time waiting	*Number waiting for beta interferon/glatiramer treatment at 30 September 2005*
(a) Less than 6 months	66
(b) 6–12 months	59
(c) 12–18 months	22
(d) 18–24 months	0
(e) 24–30 months	0
(f) 30 months	0
Total	147

Note:
Patients currently suspended from the waiting list are excluded from these figures.

Northern Ireland Events Company

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what funding has been allocated by the Northern Ireland Events Company in the last five years, broken down by *(a)* Westminster parliamentary constituency and *(b)* district council area. [18020]

Mr. Hanson: The Northern Ireland Events Company has allocated exchequer funding in Northern Ireland for the amounts shown in the table as follows:

	£ million
2000–01	1.1
2001–02	1.6
2002–03	2.1
2003–04	2.458
2004–05	1.89

Information on Northern Ireland Events Company funding for events is retained in accordance with how it is distributed, i.e. to individual events and by programme. Funding is not distributed on a parliamentary constituency or district council area basis and consequently the details requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Nurses

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many new nurses have been appointed in the Province in each of the last five years. [17116]

Mr. Woodward: The information is as follows.

Number of qualified nurses joining the HPSS in each of the last five years

	Headcount	Wholetime equivalent
April 2000 to March 2001	1,214	1,060.92
April 2001 to March 2002	982	880.53
April 2002 to March 2003	1,736	1,545.53
April 2003 to March 2004	1,483	1,347.21
April 2004 to March 2005	1,194	1,103.66

Notes:
1. Joiner figures may include: new graduates, return to practice, recruitment from independent and private sector, staff from other parts of the UK, Republic of Ireland and overseas.
2. Qualified nurses includes midwives and health visitors.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate how many of the Province's qualified nurses have left the profession in each of the last 10 years. [18418]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the number of qualified nurses who have left the nursing profession is not collected. However, the number of qualified nurses leaving the HPSS in the last 10 years is provided in the following table.

Number of qualified nurses leaving the HPSS in each of the last 10 years

April to March	Headcount	Whole time equivalent
1995–96	912	787.01
1996–97	1,104	925.37
1997–98	1,297	1,090.22
1998–99	1,120	906.73
1999–2000	725	609.63
2000–01	955	814.01
2000–02	896	741.84
2002–03	739	625.42
2003–04	913	765.48
2004–05	893	756.22

Notes:
1. Leavers may include: retirees, staff transferring to the independent or private sector, staff transferring to the NHS in England, Scotland or Wales, staff taking a career break and other destinations.
2. Information on the actual destination of leavers is not collected.
3. Qualified nurses include midwives and health visitors.

Occupational Therapy

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many occupational therapy vacancies there are within each health trust in the Province. [17514]

Mr. Woodward: The information is as follows.

Number of current vacancies for occupational therapists at each health trust as at 31 March 2005

Trust	Headcount	Wholetime equivalent
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	0	0.00
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	4	3.30
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	1	1.00
Causeway HSS Trust	2	1.50
Craigavon and Banbridge Community HSS Trust	1	1.00
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust	0	0.00
Down Lisburn HSS Trust	4	4.00
Foyle Community HSS Trust	0	0.00
Green Park Healthcare HSS Trust	1	0.50
Homefirst Community HSS Trust	11	10.00
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	3	3.00
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	2	2.00
North and West Belfast HSS Trust	15	12.60
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	6	6.00
South and East Belfast HSS Trust	8	5.00
Sperrin/Lakeland HSS Trust	1	1.00
Ulster Community and Hospitals Group HSS Trust	3	2.50
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust	0	0.00
Total	62	53.40

Number of long-term vacancies for occupational therapists at each Health Trust as at 31March 2005

Trust	Headcount	Wholetime equivalent
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	0	0.00
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	0	0.00
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	1	1.00
Causeway HSS Trust	1	1.00
Craigavon and Banbridge Community HSS Trust	0	0.00
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust	0	0.00
Down Lisburn HSS Trust	2	2.00
Foyle Community HSS Trust	0	0.00
Green Park Healthcare HSS Trust	0	0.00
Homefirst Community HSS Trust	9	8.00
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	3	3.00
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	0	0.00
North and West Belfast HSS Trust	14	11.60
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	0	0.00
South and East Belfast HSS Trust	0	0.00

Number of long-term vacancies for occupational therapists at each Health Trust as at 31March 2005

Trust	Headcount	Wholetime equivalent
Sperrin/Lakeland HSS Trust	0	0.00
Ulster Community and Hospitals Group HSS Trust	0	0.00
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust	0	0.00
Total	30	26.60

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many new occupational therapists have been appointed in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [17515]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is provided in the table.

Number of occupational therapists joining the HPSS in each of the last five years

	Headcount	Whole time equivalent
April 2000 to March 2001	56	55.11
April 2001 to March 2002	53	49.49
April 2002 to March 2003	67	64.09
April 2003 to March 2004	67	64.10
April 2004 to March 2005	86	81.23

Notes:
Joiner figures may include: new graduates, return to practice, recruitment from independent and private sector, staff from other parts of the UK, Republic of Ireland and overseas.

Operations

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many operations were performed in Northern Ireland in the last 12 months. [18031]

Mr. Woodward: There were 252,293 operations performed in surgical specialties in acute hospitals in Northern Ireland in 2004–05 (the latest year for which figures are available).

Physiotherapists

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many physiotherapists have been appointed in the Province in each of the last five years. [17546]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is provided in the table.

Number of physiotherapists joining the HPSS in each of the last five years

	Headcount	Whole time equivalent
April 2000 to March 2001	58	51.93
April 2001 to March 2002	74	68.34
April 2002 to March 2003	81	71.76
April 2003 to March 2004	96	90.92
April 2004 to March 2005	92	85.31

Notes:
Joiner figures may include: new graduates, return to practice, recruitment from independent and private sector, staff from other parts of the UK, Republic of Ireland and overseas.

Police Recruitment

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make it his policy to bar people without terrorist convictions but against whom there is good intelligence of involvement with paramilitary organisations from service as *(a)* full-time police officers, *(b)* police reservists, *(c)* police civilian staff and *(d)* police community support officers; and if he will make a statement. [18161]

Mr. Woodward: The vetting arrangements with regards to police recruitment include consideration of all relevant security and criminal information relating to the applicant and their close relatives. This also includes financial and domestic violence checks.

As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland stated unequivocally, on 13 October during his Oral Statement to the House, the normal recruitment criteria that applies to all applications to the police service at this present time will continue to apply in the future, including applications for Police Community Support Officers should the Policing Board and Chief Constable recommend their introduction to Northern Ireland.

The report of the Independent Commission was clear and unambiguous in stating that people with serious criminal or terrorist backgrounds should not be considered to serve in any area of the police service. We remain absolutely committed to this stance and foresee no circumstances where this might change.

School Crossing Patrol

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, if he will make a statement to the House on the Government's policy towards the provision of school crossing patrolmen/women at primary schools in Northern Ireland. [18685]

Angela E. Smith: The Government recognise the important contribution that these patrols make to ensure the safety of children walking to and from school, although there is no statutory requirement to provide crossing patrols at or near schools.

The Department of Education has made clear to education and library boards the need to have clear criteria for the provision of crossing patrols that ensure that patrols are provided where there are safety issues. In response, boards have agreed to operate within the Local Authority Road Safety Officers Association (LARSOA) guidelines. These guidelines provide an objective, risk-based framework for assessing the need for crossing patrols, taking into account factors such as the volume of traffic, road width, availability of footpaths and provision of other crossing aids such as footbridges or pelican crossings. Where the guidelines demonstrate particular hazards or risks, crossing patrols are normally provided.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether an education board is obliged to immediately replace a retiring school crossing patrolman/woman with a new patrolman/woman whenever real risk to the safety of school children attending school is assessed to exist. [18686]

Angela E. Smith: When an education and library board is aware that a crossing patrolperson is going to retire/resign, it will carry out an assessment of need to determine if the patrol point still meets the eligibility criteria relating to the identification of hazards and assessing risks as determined in a framework based on the Local Authority Road Safety Officers' Association (LARSOA) guidelines. If the patrol point does not meet the criteria a board will not replace the retiring patrolperson. However, if the patrol point still meets the criteria a board will then take action to recruit a new crossing patrolperson.

School Nurses

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what obligations school nurses in Northern Ireland are under to inform parents when they are approached by a 13-year-old schoolgirl seeking contraceptive treatment. [17551]

Mr. Woodward: All nurses, including school nurses, are bound by their code of professional conduct which, among other things, requires them to observe the duty of confidentiality to all persons seeking advice or treatment including those under 16 years. The code of professional conduct sets out clear guidance on occasions where confidentiality may be breached, for example, for child protection purposes.

Sexual Health Strategy

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what consultations have taken place with religious groups in relation to the development of the sexual health strategy. [17555]

Mr. Woodward: All the main religious groups were consulted on the draft Sexual Health Promotion Strategy and Action Plan and detailed responses were received from them. In addition further consultations took place in June 2005 between officials and representatives of both the Catholic Church's Family Ministry Commission and CARE, a mainstream Christian movement.

The responses have been analysed and their on-going evaluation is helping to develop the latest draft of the strategy.

Smoking

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the implications of the recent announcement by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission that the freedom to work in a smoke-free environment is a human rights issue; and if he will make a statement. [18905]

Mr. Woodward: On 17 October 2005 the Department announced that it would introduce comprehensive controls on smoking in all enclosed public places and workplaces, including pubs and bars. A key factor in the decision was the need to protect the public and employees from the dangers of exposure to second hand smoke. It is the intention that the legislation will come into force before the summer of 2007.

Speech and Language Therapists

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many new speech and language therapists have been appointed in the Province in each of the last five years. [17561]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is provided in the table.

Number of speech and language therapists joining the HPSS in each of the last five years

April to March:	*Headcount*	*Whole-time equivalent*
2000–01	25	20.28
2001–02	31	26.91
2002–03	27	25.15
2003–04	34	29.40
2004–05	37	35.88

Note:
Joiner figures may include: new graduates, return to practice, recruitment from independent and private sector, staff from other parts of the UK, Republic of Ireland and overseas.

Speed Limits (Residential Zones)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how many 20 mph residential zones are planned in Northern Ireland; and what the locations are of the planned zones; [18021]

(2) how many 20 mph residential zones there are in Northern Ireland; [18026]

(3) if he will list the location of all 20 mph residential zones within Northern Ireland. [18027]

Mr. Woodward: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has written to the hon. Lady in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin to Iris Robinson, dated 17 October 2005:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland three Parliamentary Questions: "how many 20 mph residential zones are planned in Northern Ireland, and what the locations are of the planned zones; how many 20 mph residential zones there are in Northern Ireland, and if he will list the location of all current 20 mph residential zones within Northern Ireland". I have been asked to reply as these issues fall within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

By way of information, I should explain that 20-mph zones are a form of traffic calming and are generally implemented in residential areas where an extensive network of streets is involved and self-enforcing measures can be provided to reduce vehicle speeds to approximately 20-mph. Whenever speeds have been reduced to this, it is then possible to introduce a mandatory 20-mph limit. If the level of traffic calming measures are insufficient to reduce speeds to around 20-mph, then it is not possible to introduce a 20-mph mandatory limit.

Roads Service has implemented thirty-seven 20 mph residential zones in the following locations:

Andersons town area, Belfast

Ardoyne area, Belfast

Ballymurphy area, Belfast

Ballynafeigh area, Belfast

Bloomfield area, Belfast

Donegall Road Village area, Belfast

Holylands area, Belfast

Riverdale area, Belfast

Sullenboy Park, Cookstown
Braeside, Dungannon
Meadowbank, Dungannon
Windmill Court, Dungannon
Windmill Drive, Dungannon
Woodburn Crescent, Dungannon
Beech Hill, Enniskillen
Cavandale, Enniskillen
Severn Street area, Belfast
Taughmonagh area, Belfast
Tonagh Estate, Lisburn
Turf Lodge area, Belfast
Greenvale Drive, Cookstown
Ratheen Avenue, Cookstown
Derrin Road, Enniskillen
Erne Drive, Enniskillen
Meelmore Drive, Omagh
Carlton Drive, Strabane
Lisnafin Road, Strabane
Sycamore Drive, Enniskillen
Willowvale, Enniskillen
Altmore Drive, Dungannon
Lisnahull Road, Dungannon
Mournebeg Drive, Dungannon
Corban Avenue, Enniskillen
Ballycolman, Strabane
Lisanally Lane, Armagh
Brownstown West, Portadown
Carlisle Park, Ballynahinch

In addition Roads Service has plans to implement a further eight 20mph residential zones in the following locations, subject to them clearing the necessary statutory procedures and the availability of funding:

Windmill Heights, Enniskillen
Espey Road, Killyman
Springhill Park, Strabane
Sion Mills, village area
Parkview, Pomeroy
Parkview Drive, Pomeroy
Shanroy Park, Pomeroy
Scrabo Estate, Newtownards

I should also advise that Roads Service has implemented one non-mandatory "advisory" 20-mph zone in Earhart Park, Londonderry, and has plans for a further three advisory 20-mph zones in Westlake and Duncastle Park, Londonderry and in Collinbridge area, Newtownabbey. The primary aim of these advisory 20-mph zones is to test the effectiveness of signing alone without the accompanying self enforcing engineering measures.

I hope this information is helpful.

Sports Council

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding has been allocated by the Sports Council in Northern Ireland over the last five years, broken down by *(a)* Westminster parliamentary constituency and *(b)* district council area. [18016]

Mr. Hanson: The Sports Council for Northern Ireland has allocated Exchequer and Lottery funding in Northern Ireland for the amounts shown in the table in the last five years. This includes funding for bodies with a province-wide remit, for example, governing bodies of sport.

Monies allocated by the Sports Council for Northern Ireland

£ million

	Exchequer	*Lottery*
2000–01	4.423	5.528
2001–02	3.536	2.090
2002–03	5.276	1.896
2003–04	7.096	2.903
2004–05	5.937	0.788

Information on Exchequer and Lottery funding for sport is retained by the Sports Council for Northern Ireland in accordance with how it is distributed, i.e. to sport, to individual athletes, district council areas and by programme. Information on Exchequer funding has only been kept, with regard to district council area, since 2003–04, therefore the information requested for district council areas cannot be provided for Exchequer funding for the years 2000–01, 2001–02 and 2002–03. Exchequer and Lottery funding is not distributed on a parliamentary constituency Basis, and consequently, the details requested regarding funding broken down by parliamentary constituency areas cannot be provided, except at disproportionate cost.

The amounts of exchequer funding allocated by the Sports Council for Northern Ireland on a district council basis for the years 2003–04 and 2004–05 are shown in the following table:

Exchequer funding by Sports Council for Northern Ireland

£

Council area	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Antrim	0	920
Ards	0	0
Armagh	32,412	28,904
Ballymena	46,989	20,000
Ballymoney	0	108,088
Banbridge	7,610	16,013
Belfast	269,763	722,941
Carrickfergus	0	3,517
Castlereagh	0	105,530
Coleraine	2,101	119,510
Cookstown	16,097	20,297
Craigavon	56,640	306,046
Derry	53,914	353,690
Down	0	136,213
Dungannon	0	0
Fermanagh	0	0
Larne	0	114,000
Limavady	10,845	11,720
Lisburn	3,750	37,316
Magherafelt	15,250	16,550
Moyle	17,045	42,008
Newry and Mourne	0	112,000
Newtownabbey	22,554	38,000
North Down	9,850	4,680
Omagh	8,484	38,636
Strabane	0	112,500

The amounts of Lottery funding allocated by the Sports Council for Northern Ireland on a district council basis for the years 2000–01 to 2004–05 are shown in the table. Minus figures indicate awards made in previous years, which have been withdrawn (e.g. for insufficient partnership funding).

Lottery funding by Sports Council for Northern Ireland

£

Council area	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Antrim	350,000	160,000	365,000	67,000	-134,963
Ards	106,450	0	33,313	-8,077	-43,373
Armagh	46,389	268,524	70,000	286,327	-210,079
Ballymena	170,000	0	80,000	188,443	395,000
Ballymoney	105,375	0	0	0	0
Banbridge	Nil	53,000	85,000	190,000	-4,200
Belfast	822,577	163,908	150,000	0	611,847
Carrickfergus	0	14,000	0	0	0
Castlereagh	60,000	0	30,345	70,000	-60,000
Coleraine	58,019	0	0	85,000	-8,871
Cookstown	308,188	150,000	104,860	0	-25,236
Craigavon	185,000	145,538	0	0	-19,410
Derry	195,000	76,685	15,000	300,496	190,239
Down	303,542	256,137	155,214	70,000	212,131
Dungannon	349,857	30,000	214,649	105,000	-174,935
Fermanagh	319,934	143,591	130,000	316,441	-179,010
Larne	162,900	170,000	0	0	-20,123
Limavady	197,885	0	70,000	70,000	-352,075
Lisburn	393,284	0	23,000	6,680	36,540
Magherafelt	199,410	145,000	0	60,000	112,075
Moyle	0	0	0	0	0
Newry and Mourne	182,300	153,875	120,000	295,874	110,064
Newtownabbey	219,000	0	80,000	247,795	-76,552
North Down	0	15,000	0	81,225	30,000
Omagh	528,645	135,000	70,000	332,490	-51,067
Strabane	258,570	10,429	100,000	112,593	72,500

Teriparitide

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the availability of Teriparitide in Northern Ireland. [17133]

Mr. Woodward: Teriparitide is licensed for the treatment of established osteoporosis in post-menopausal women.

The decision to prescribe a particular medicine is a matter for clinicians, taking account of the clinical circumstances of the individual patient, a drug's licensed indications and local prescribing policies and commissioning decisions.

Additional funding of £5 million has been allocated in 2005–06 for specialist hospital drugs. It is for the health and social services boards, as commissioners of services, to prioritise how funding is used, taking into account the competing demands and pressures in their areas and the strategic objectives and priorities of my Department.

I understand that boards have not identified funding for Teriparitide in the current financial year but will be keeping this position under review.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Commercial Court

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much funding the Treasury is providing for the improvement of the facilities at the commercial court. [16648]

Ms Harman: My Department will able to give this information when the business case has been received, evaluated and the funding level quantified.

Electoral Administration Bill

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will deposit in the Library copies of the responses received to her Department's consultation paper on the Electoral Administration Bill. [17465]

Ms Harman: We received over 160 responses, within the deadline, to the policy paper on electoral administration which was put out on 25 May this year. On 11 October, alongside introduction of the Electoral Administration Bill, we published a paper which detailed and analysed the responses received. Copies of the paper were put into the Libraries of both Houses on that day.

Freedom of Information

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what investigations she has undertaken into whether the Data Protection Act 1998 is being used as a way of preventing governmental information being divulged under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. [16419]

Ms Harman: Section 40 of the Freedom of Information Act limits the applications of the FOI rights of access to personal information by reference to provisions of the DPA. This provision ensures consistency across the FOI and data protection regimes.

No investigation has been undertaken on the use of S40, however there is no evidence that DPA 1998 is being used a way of preventing information being divulged under FOI, disproportionately to other exemptions or that it has been cited without good reason. Statistics have been published on the implementation of the FOI Act 2000 in central Government which show that in quarter one and

quarter two, 22,403 requests have been received. Exemptions have been claimed 3,631 times to refuse information with section 40, being used 930 times. These statistics are available at www.FOI.gov.uk.

Graduated Fees

Ms Gisela Stuart: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent consultations she has had with the General Council of the Bar and the Law Society about the graduated fee payment scheme. [17129]

Bridget Prentice: The Lord Chancellor and I meet regularly with representatives of the General Council of the Bar and the Law Society to discuss a range of issues, including the Graduated Fee Scheme.

Legal Deposit Libraries

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the Government have produced guidance on the effect of the Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003 on political parties and their constituent organisations; and if she will make a statement. [17464]

Ms Harman: No guidance has been produced on the effect of the Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003 on political parties or their constituent organisations, nor do we currently intend to issue any guidance.

Lyons Inquiry

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what guidance has been issued to the Lyons Inquiry into local government funding on whether the inquiry is a public authority under the Freedom of Information Act 2000; and if she will make a statement. [17467]

Ms Harman: The Lyons Inquiry into local government funding is not a public authority for the purposes of the Act. As an independent organisation it is also not part of any other public authority. A report will be published when the inquiry is complete. Information held by the inquiry will then be transferred to either HM Treasury or ODPM and then will be covered by the Act.

Marked Electoral Registers

Ian Lucas: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how the fee payable for delivery of the marked elector register following the 2005 General Election is calculated for each parliamentary constituency. [17124]

Ms Harman: The fees structure for purchasing copies of the marked electoral registers for the 2005 General Election, have been set by the Clerk of the Crown, with agreement by HM Treasury, as required under Rule 57(3) of Schedule 1, The Representation of the People Act 1983.

They stand at 35p per copied page of A4; an £8 handling charge: and, postage and packaging at cost. These fees exclude VAT.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list what representations and complaints her Department has received since the general election in relation to the marked register service provided by Pickfords; and if she will make a statement. [17468]

Ms Harman: Seven written representations have been received by my Department. four of these were from MPs: George Madie MP, Lynne Featherstone MP, Sir George Young MP and Kevin Jones MP. Two were from political party constituency associations; Selby Conservatives and Poole Liberal Democrats. One representation was received from the electoral services manager for Mansfield, on behalf of a local political party constituency association.

Opinion Surveys

Mr. Weir: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the *(a)* subject matter and *(b)* dates were of opinion survey research undertaken by the Department and its agencies in the last 12 months; if she will place copies of the results of each survey in the Library; which companies were used in conducting the research; and how much each was paid. [14813]

Ms Harman: The information requested is not held centrally A fully comprehensive reply could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Six major studies of public opinion were undertaken on behalf of DCA in the past 12 months, to inform policy development. Each is directly supportive of DCA's objective of putting excellent service to the public at the heart of everything it does, as outlined in the Department's five-year strategy.

Project	*Completed*	*Cost (£000)*	*Company*
1. Courts customer survey	February 2005	248	ORC Intl.
2. Engaging with the criminal justice system	March 2005	110	PWC
3. Voters and voting	January 2005	69	2CV
4. Information rights	February 2005	51	CraggRossDawson
5. Liverpool justice centre	July 2005	40	TNS
6. PGO customer survey	January 2005	26	IPSOS
Total		[1]544	

[1] Exc. VAT

Copies of all published results of this research will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses, as they become available.

Postal Voting

Chris Ruane: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many and what percentage of *(a)* votes cast in each constituency at the last general election were postal votes and *(b)* postal votes were disallowed, listed in descending order according to the highest percentage of postal votes disallowed. [17939]

Ms Harman: My Department does not hold this information. The Electoral Commission will be publishing this information as part of their official report on the 2005 General Election, and has indicated that these figures will be published shortly.

Property Repossessions

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many court repossessions of property there were in the last 15 years. [18246]

Bridget Prentice: The Enforcement of Judgments Office (EJO) carries out evictions of property on foot of repossession orders.

Statistics on the number of evictions carried-out by the EJO have been collated since October 2001.

Evictions carried out by Enforcement of Judgments Office

	Number
2001[1]	52
2002	106
2003	212
2004	218
2005[2]	177

[1] October to December.
[2] Up to end of September.

WORK AND PENSIONS

"A Helping Hand for MPs"

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the total cost was, including man hours of research, of the production of A Helping Hand for MPs by the Health and Safety Executive; [15929]

(2) what market research was carried out to ascertain whether hon. Members *(a)* wanted and *(b)* needed the handbook A Helping Hand for MPs. [15930]

Mrs. McGuire: The decision to produce the handbook was based on various sources of feedback from MPs and their researchers. This included surveys conducted by NFP Synergy on the attitude of MPs towards various non-departmental public bodies. The research indicated that MPs wished to have more contact with HSE, and that health and safety issues were a common theme in constituency correspondence that they deal with. As a result, the handbook was produced to provide an easy source of reference for answers to a typical range of questions about health and safety, and to provide helpful contact details for more information. The total cost of producing the handbook (including HSE staff time) was £12,000. A number of MPs have thanked HSE for the handbook.

"Opportunity for All"

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he will publish the Opportunity for All report for 2005. [18041]

Mr. Blunkett: I am today publishing the 7th Opportunity for All report for 2005 and will be launching the report at the End Child Poverty Conference.

A copy of the 7th Opportunity for All report for 2005 is available in the Library.

Benefits Agency Database

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many independent companies have access to the Benefits Agency database; and if he will make a statement. [16988]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie to Ms Lynne Featherstone, dated 17 October 2005:

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has asked me to reply to your question concerning how many independent companies have access to the Benefits Agency database. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

It may be helpful if I first explain that Jobcentre Plus came into existence as a national organisation at the beginning of April 2002. The Benefits Agency and Employment Service ceased to exist at the same time.

Jobcentre Plus takes its responsibilities under the Data Protection Act very seriously and does not allow independent companies access to any benefit databases, or to any other customer information.

As part of the normal business of Jobcentre Plus, a benefit customer may receive information about national or local initiatives or programmes that may assist them in finding employment, including information from organisations delivering these initiatives and programmes. This contact will be made through Jobcentre Plus only and at no time will an independent company have access to our databases.

I hope this is helpful.

Cold Weather Payments

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the value of the cold weather payment for senior citizens was in the winter of 2003–04; and what it is for 2005–06. [18539]

Mr. Plaskitt: The total value of cold weather payments in Great Britain for 2003–04 as reported in the Programme Accounting Computer System was £3.81 million. Of this £2.25 million was paid to those over pensionable age. As cold weather payments are dependent on the average temperature over a set period of time, the value of payments for 2005–06 cannot be forecast.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have claimed incapacity benefits in the Birkenhead area in each year since 1997. [18878]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the table.

Number of incapacity benefit and severe disability allowance claimants in Birkenhead parliamentary constituency; at date shown

As at February:	*Number*
1997	9,500
1998	8,900
1999	8,900
2000	8,300
2001	8,600
2002	8,400

Number of incapacity benefit and severe disability allowance claimants in Birkenhead parliamentary constituency; at date shown

As at February:	*Number*
2003	8,000
2004	8,200
2005	8,100

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. "Claimants" include all incapacity benefit, severe disability allowance and national insurance credits only cases.

Source:
DWP Information Centre, 5 per cent. sample

Jobcentre Plus

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his policy is on nursery and childcare support for employees of Jobcentre Plus. [17605]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie to Mr. Andrew Smith, dated 17 October 2005:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning his policy on nursery and childcare support for employees of Jobcentre Plus. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus currently provides nursery and childcare support in some locations where doing so has helped us address historical difficulties with staff recruitment or retention. The individual business cases behind these arrangements are kept under review.

In 2006, we will offer a 'salary sacrifice' scheme to all our employees. The salary sacrifice scheme is a Government initiative whereby the employee 'sacrifices' an amount of their salary (to a maximum of £50 per week) which is converted into childcare vouchers for them to use. National insurance contributions and tax are not deducted from the sacrificed amount, allowing the individual to benefit from the scheme.

More widely, Jobcentre Plus, as part of the Department for Work and Pensions, has policies which support flexible working and which enable our employees to balance their working lives with their caring responsibilities at home. These policies are well used—31 % of our staff work on a part time basis, and the majority of them make use of flexible working hours. We also offer the facility for people to work during term time only, and will consider accommodating any flexible working pattern, providing that, in so doing, we are able to meet our responsibility to deliver our services to customers.

I hope this is helpful.

Outsourced Employment Programmes

Sir Malcolm Rifkind: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the total management costs of each outsourced Government employment programme have been in each year since their creation; [16565]

(2) what the management costs of each outsourced Government employment programme has been as a percentage of total costs in each year since their creation. [16566]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is not available.

Information on total expenditure on our employment programmes is in the latest departmental report, which is available in the Library.

Shop Workers

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what advice he has received from the Health and Safety Commission on sickness and absence among retail shop workers; what assessment the Commission has made of the extent to which threats and intimidation from customers play a part in the industry's sickness and absence record; and if he will make a statement. [13976]

Mrs. McGuire: Information on the level of sickness caused by work-related violence among retail shop workers is not available.

Incidents of work-related violence which cause a physical injury, and where absence from work is for over three days, are reportable to the Health and Safety Executive and local authorities under the Reporting of Injuries, Dangerous Diseases and Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995. The number of incidents of work-related violence among shop workers reported under RIDDOR is set out as follows:

	Fatal injury	*Non-fatal major injury*	*Over-3-day injury*	*All reported injuries*
2000–01	—	44	233	277
2001–02	1	60	227	288
2002–03	—	57	256	313
2003–04	—	56	212	268

The Health and Safety Commission (HSC) is firmly committed to tackling workplace violence, and believes that working in partnership and developing stronger links with stakeholders is the most effective way forward.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has been working closely with the Home Office to help reduce the incidence of work-related violence in the retail sector, primarily through HSE's stakeholder group, the Partnership on Work-Related Violence (POW-V). This group is targeting those sectors where there is most risk of violence to staff, including the retail sector, with a view to developing, promoting and sharing information and good practice in managing work-related violence, and making this information fully accessible.

Both HSE and the Home Office support USDAW's Freedom from Fear campaign which brings together employers, local authorities and the police to help promote the safety and well-being of shop workers.

Unemployment

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what percentage of people in Houghton and Washington, East constituency were unemployed in each year since 1997; and what estimate he has made of changes in the amount paid in benefits due to the change in employment over the time period. [13314]

Margaret Hodge: Information on the change in the amount paid in benefits due to the change in employment since 1997 is not available at constituency

level. In Great Britain it is estimated that, compared to 1996–97, we are now spending £5 billion a year less on the cost of unemployment related benefits as a result of the increase in employment levels.

Information on unemployment in Houghton and Washington, East constituency is in the table.

Unemployment in Houghton and Washington, East constituency

	Number of people	Proportion of working age population
1997	2,603	4.7
1998	2,254	4.1
1999	2,475	4.5
2000	2,180	3.9
2001	2,056	3.7
2002	1,823	3.3
2003	1,667	3
2004	1,300	2.3
2005	1,256	2.3

Note:
Figures are claimant count for June of each year.
Source:
DWP statistics

HEALTH

Alzheimer's

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions she has had with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence on the NHS making available drugs to treat Alzheimer's disease; and if she will make a statement. [17975]

Jane Kennedy: I received an update on the progress of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence's (NICE) appraisal of drugs for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease during a meeting with NICE'S chair and chief executive on 9 June 2005.

Cancer Treatment

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many drugs have been in receipt of NHS funding without having been recommended by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence appraisal in each of the last five years for which records are available. [17786]

Jane Kennedy: All drugs are available via the national health service if considered clinically necessary, regardless of whether they have been the subject of appraisal by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence.

Death Certification

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has for changing the arrangements for payments that doctors receive in addition to their normal salaries for filling out *(a)* the form to certify that a deceased body is suitable for cremation and *(b)* the form to section a patient under the Mental Health Acts; and if she will make a statement. [18275]

Ms Harman: I have been asked to reply.

The issue of fees for Mental Health Act medical work rests with the Department of Health, and there are no plans for changing the payment arrangements. In relation to cremation certification, we have been looking carefully at how best we can improve the current system and intend to make an announcement as soon as possible.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many payments for completion of the cremation form have been given to doctors in each of the five years for which records are available. [18276]

Ms Harman: I have been asked to reply.

This information is not held centrally.

Dentistry

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the current average waiting time is from first appointment with a dentist to operation for a child in the Avon area whose tooth needs to be removed under general anaesthetic. [17031]

Caroline Flint: The Department does not hold this information.

Departmental Land/Property

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what target has been set by the Department for *(a)* land and *(b)* building disposals in Hampshire in the current financial year, broken down by site. [16861]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not have a specific target for land sales in Hampshire. The only property programmed for disposal in Hampshire during 2005–06, which is in the ownership of the Secretary of State for Health, is land adjacent to South Lodge, St. James' Hospital, Portsmouth. As contracts are in the process of being agreed, the sale price is currently commercially confidential.

National health service trusts and primary care trusts are responsible for their own disposals.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many properties her Department is paying rent for that are empty in *(a)* Brent East, *(b)* Brent and *(c)* London. [16883]

Jane Kennedy: There is one empty property in Brent East and a further three in London, none of which are in Brent East or Brent, upon which the Department is currently paying rent. Departmental officials are actively seeking to dispose of them.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when her Department's property at 20 Willesden High Road was last in use; how much rent per month is being paid for the property; what plans her Department has for the site; and if she will make a statement. [16920]

Jane Kennedy: The property, at 22–24 High Road, Willesden, was formerly occupied by Brent community health council and was vacated in December 2003. The current rent paid is £29,375 per annum. The lease expires in June 2011. Having established that there was no national health service interest in the property, attempts have been made to either assign the lease or sub-let. Both have been unsuccessful. A notice to break the lease

has been served effective from June 2006—negotiations are currently taking place with the landlord seeking an earlier surrender.

Diagnosis Treatment Centres

Mr. Hunt: *To ask the Secretary of State for Health* what assessment her Department has *(a)* made and *(b)* received of the productivity of diagnosis treatment centres. [16585]

Mr. Byrne: The Department published "Treatment Centres: Delivering Faster, Quality Care and Choice for NHS Patients", which includes a chapter on productivity, on 7 January 2005.

The report found that, by investing in dedicated facilities such as treatment centres, it was possible to perform, for example, many more cataract procedures in a given day by concentrating on a single procedure in a modern, purpose-built unit.

The report is available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/10/05/24/04100524.pdf

Doctor Vacancies

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many qualified doctors in England are unemployed; and how many vacancies there are for newly qualified doctors in England. [16573]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the number of qualified doctors who are unemployed and on the number of vacancies for newly qualified doctors is not held centrally.

A snapshot survey of postgraduate deaneries established that, as at early August 2005, 136 pre-registration house officers (PRHOs) in England did not have a senior house officer (SHO) or equivalent post to move to upon the expiry of their PRHO contract. This number had reduced to around 100 by early September 2005 and is likely to have reduced further as more SHO opportunities become available.

Drug Appraisal

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps she is taking to speed up the drug appraisal process in England; [17924]

(2) what steps her Department are taking to improve the efficiency of the drug appraisal process. [17925]

Jane Kennedy: We are currently considering proposals from the National Institute for Clinical Excellence for a revised technology appraisal process allowing more rapid appraisal of certain new drugs and health technologies.

Hospital Re-admissions

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many emergency re-admissions of people there have been in each quarter since 2001; and how many were of people aged *(a)* 0 to 10, *(b)* 10 to 18, *(c)* 18 to 65, *(d)* 65 to 75 and *(e)* 75 years and over. [10164]

Mr. Byrne: The data are shown in the table. A detailed specification is available at www.nchod.nhs.uk.

Emergency admissions within 28 days of discharge—calendar years 2001 to 2004—national health service hospitals, England

	Age					
Calendar year quarters	*0–9*	*10–17*	*18–64*	*65–74*	*75+*	*Total*
2001						
1 January-31 March	14,404	5,159	49,783	19,934	32,224	121,504
1 April-30 June	12,589	5,146	52,301	19,845	32,219	122,100
1 July-30 September	10,904	5,084	54,119	19,815	31,734	121,656
1 October-31 December	13,472	4,794	46,114	17,296	28,056	109,732
2002						
1 January-31 March	14,705	5,195	51,291	19,556	32,321	123,068
1 April-30 June	12,631	5,559	54,200	20,056	33,586	126,032
1 July-30 September	10,928	5,088	55,084	20,034	34,074	125,208
1 October-31 December	13,418	4,611	45,652	17,493	29,802	110,976
2003						
1 January-31 March	14,551	5,779	53,164	20,755	35,782	130,031
1 April-30 June	12,335	5,620	57,004	21,502	36,656	133,117
1 July-30 September	11,090	5,511	60,462	21,844	37,576	136,483
1 October-31 December	13,888	5,112	50,393	19,073	33,613	122,079
2004						
1 January-31 March	15,142	6,141	59,757	22,703	40,583	144,326
1 April-30 June	13,181	6,165	63,495	23,219	41,423	147,483
1 July-30 September	11,598	5,625	66,212	23,382	41,149	147,966
1 October-31 December	14,266	5,093	55,386	19,407	34,770	128,922

Notes:

1. A finished consultant episode is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that the figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.
2. Hospital episode statistics (HES) are compiled from data sent by over 300 NHS trusts and primary care trusts in England. The Health and Social Care Information Centre liaises closely with these organisations to encourage submission of correct data.

Source:

HES, Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Barbara Keeley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the rates of re-admission to hospitals were in *(a)* England and *(b)* Lancashire in each year since 1997. [15096]

Mr. Byrne: Re-admission data from 1998–99, which is calculated using the re-admission rate definition,

"emergency re-admissions to hospitals within 28 days of discharge from hospitals",

is available at www.nchod.nhs.uk, where a full definition is given in the guidance notes.

Hospital Violence

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* doctors, *(b)* nurses, *(c)* consultants and *(d)* auxiliary staff have been victims of violence at work in the Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust area in each of the last 10 years. [17292]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* This information is not collected at trust level. National data is collected, but this is not broken down by trust. Such information may be held locally by the national health service trust in question, and the hon. Member may wish to approach the Chair of Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals Trust directly.

Hospital-acquired Infections

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Aylesbury (Mr. Lidington) of 27 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1344–45W, on *Clostridium difficile*, in which primary care trust in Bristol the case of *Clostridium difficile* occurred. [9380]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 4 July 2005]:* The single isolate of *Clostridium difficile* was sent by the Bristol Royal Infirmary to the Anaerobe Reference Laboratory in Cardiff, where it was typed as the 027 strain. However, this isolate did not originate in Bristol; it came from the Royal United hospital in Bath.

IVF Treatment

Mr. Barron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what action she plans to take in response to the decision by North Hampshire Primary Care Trust not to provide in vitro fertilisation treatment; [15198]

(2) if she will take steps to ensure other primary care trusts do not follow the decision made by North Hampshire Primary Care Trust not to provide in vitro fertilisation treatment; [15199]

Mr. Barron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of progress towards the target of one full cycle of IVF treatment for each eligible couple by April. [15201]

Caroline Flint: It is for each primary care trust, in liaison with local health bodies and patient groups, to make decisions on the implementation of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence's guideline on fertility treatment, taking resources and local healthcare priorities into account. The extent to which national health service organisations comply with national guidance is considered by the Healthcare Commission during its review and performance assessment process.

Male Breast Reduction

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many male breast reduction operations were carried out in the last year for which figures are available. [17344]

Jane Kennedy: There were 61 periods of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider during 2003–04 of male breast reduction operations provided by the national health service for clinical reasons. These figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year. The Department does not collect figures on male breast reduction operations carried out in the independent sector for cosmetic reasons.

Medical Services (Dudley)

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much her Department has allocated for *(a)* hospital services, *(b)* general practitioner services and *(c)* dental services in (i) Dudley North and (ii) the Borough of Dudley in each year since 1997. [15381]

Mr. Byrne: The information is not available in the format requested.

National health service allocations to Dudley Health Authority, Dudley Beacon and Castle Primary Care Trust (PCT) and Dudley South PCT for hospital services in each year since 1997–98 and for general practitioner services in each year since 2004–05 are shown in the tables.

Funding for general practitioner services and general dental or high street dental services has historically, with some exceptions, been held centrally and not allocated to health authorities (HAs) or PCTs. Funding was demand led, with payments made in response to the services actually provided by general practitioners and dentists. Budgets for hospital and community dental services were set locally by HAs, or latterly PCTs, drawing on their total NHS allocations.

Following the introduction of the new general practitioner contract, the Department made primary medical services allocations to PCTs in 2004–05 and 2005–06. This will become part of PCTs' overall allocations from 2006–07.

With the introduction of local commissioning arrangements and a new dental contract for general dental services, the Department will make primary care dental allocations to PCTs from 2006–07.

Table 1 shows the allocations made to Dudley HA in 1997–98 and 1998–99. The Department made allocations to health authorities from 1996–97 for hospital and community health services (HCHS).

Table 1: HCHS allocations 1997–98 to 1998–99

Dudley HA	*£ million*
1997–98	128.2
1998–99	134.5

Note:
It is not possible to separate the allocations for hospital services from the allocations for community health services.

Table 2 shows the unified allocations made to Dudley HA between 1999–2000 to 2002–03. The Department made unified allocations to HAs from 1999–2000 covering HCHS, prescribing and general medical services cash limited.

Table 2: Unified allocations 1999–2000 to 2002–03

Dudley HA	*£ million*
1999–2000	183.0
2000–01	200.5
2001–02	218.8
2002–03	241.7

Note:
These services cannot be separately identified. These figures are not comparable with earlier years which cover HCHS only.

Since 2003–04, the Department has made allocations to PCTs. Table 3 shows the revenue allocations made to Dudley Beacon and Castle PCT and Dudley South PCT for 2003–04 to 2005–06.

Table 3: revenue allocations, 2003–04 to 2005–06

£ million

	Dudley Beacon and Castle PCT	*Dudley South PCT*
2003–04	94.6	167.2
2004–05	104.0	183.3
2005–06	114.4	200.2

The Department made separate primary medical services allocations to PCTs in 2004–05 and 2005–06. Table 4 shows the primary medical services allocations to Dudley Beacon and Castle PCT and Dudley South PCT in 2004–05 and 2005–06.

Table 4: Primary medical services allocations 2004–05 and 2005–06

£ million

	Dudley Beacon and Castle PCT	*Dudley South PCT*
2004–05	8.2	15.4
2005–06	8.6	16.4

Note:
These allocations covered the bulk of the funding for the new general practitioner contract, with the remaining funding for quality being transferred to and then allocated by the NHS Bank.

In February 2005, the Department announced revenue resource allocations to PCTs for 2006–07 and 2007–08. Table 5 shows the revenue allocations to Dudley Beacon and Castle PCT and Dudley South PCT for 2006–08.

Table 5: Revenue resource allocations 2006–07 and 2007–08

£ million

	Dudley Beacon and Castle PCT	*Dudley South PCT*
2006–07	136.1	237.3
2007–08	149.0	258.0

Note:
These include primary medical services funding and are not comparable with earlier years.

Methadone

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the costs have been of prescribed methadone for each NHS trust in Greater London in each year since 2001. [18007]

Jane Kennedy: This information is not collected in the format requested. However, figures for London primary care trusts (PCTs) from 2001 to 2004, which are the latest available, are shown in the tables. These figures are not comparable as there have been changes to PCT configurations during this period. There were also small amounts of prescribing which could not be allocated to a specific PCT.

Methadone can be prescribed for suppressing a cough, usually in terminal disease, for analgesia and for treating substance dependence. Figures for each of these are also shown in the tables.

2001—Net ingredient cost

£

	Cough suppressant	*Analgesia*	*Substance dependence*	*Grand total*
Prescriber name	0309010S0	0407020M0	0410000M0	
PCT				
Barking and Dagenham	5.22	21,077.58	23,656.19	44,738.99
Barnet	20.97	12,052.70	9,843.57	21,917.24
Bexley	17.78	261.57	1,698.34	1,977.69
Brent Teaching	8.32	115,306.10	59,174.86	174,489.28
Bromley	0	5,206.46	1,226.03	6,432.49
Camden	14.7	6,897.06	37,495.96	44,407.72
Chingford, Wanstead and Woodford	0	1,987.98	1,161.72	3,149.70
City and Hackney Teaching	1.04	1,522.58	32,404.59	33,928.21
Croydon	40.73	1,354.88	2,520.08	3,915.69
Ealing	12.59	4,628.05	8,069.92	12,710.56
Enfield	13.64	3,570.60	2,723.57	6,307.81
Greenwich Teaching	5.25	2,505.40	16,132.86	18,643.51
Hammersmith and Fulham	0	34,522.81	29,725.94	64,248.75
Haringey	7.98	2,085.02	12,941.50	15,034.50

2001—Net ingredient cost

£

	Cough suppressant	Analgesia	Substance dependence	Grand total
Harrow	6.76	9,848.99	20,089.90	29,945.65
Havering	2.08	1,947.00	12,481.10	14,430.18
Hillingdon	12.03	696.57	656.40	1,365.00
Hounslow	0	60.75	3,042.44	3,103.19
Islington	4.65	6,266.5	36,803.36	43,074.51
Kensington and Chelsea	7.01	8,770.65	20,765.94	29,543.60
Kingston	0	1,922.64	11,274.57	13,197.21
Lambeth	0	7,760.51	79,688.02	87,448.53
Lewisham	14.56	3,268.66	36,734.12	40,017.34
Newham	0	566.42	24,741 .97	25,308.39
Redbridge	16.69	1,235.79	1,326.23	2,578.71
Richmond and Twickenham	0	409.22	6,697.05	7,106.27
Southwark	21.13	8,147.70	20,995.84	29,164.67
Sutton and Merton	13.64	5,494.06	872.02	6,379.72
Tower Hamlets	11.07	8,339.35	55,558.90	63,909.32
Waltham, Leyton and Leytonstone	5.2	359.87	1,931.86	2,296.93
Wandsworth	14.61	7,293.75	3,226.66	10,535.02
Westminster	10.61	17,171.61	57,972.13	75,154.35

2002—Net ingredient cost

£

	Cough suppressant	Analgesia	Substance dependence	Grand total
Prescriber name	0309010S0	0407020M0	0410000M0	
PCT				
Barking and Dagenham	0	20,884.24	25,922.01	46,806.25
Barnet	0	11,352.63	8,811.65	20,164.28
Bexley	2.1	320.54	1,897.8	2,220.44
Brent Teaching	20.53	102,668.83	63,723.71	166,413.07
Bromley	5.25	5,510.69	1,674.09	7,190.03
Camden	10.63	6,788.7	35,077.44	41,876.77
Chingford, Wanstead and Woodford	0	2,679.95	1,119.77	3,799.72
City and Hackney Teaching	16.31	1,654.66	38,669.2	40,340.17
Croydon	43.15	1,255.14	2,450.35	3,748.64
Ealing	1.05	2,891.94	9,039.39	11,932.38
Enfield	21.03	4,183.25	2,080.29	6,284.57
Greenwich Teaching	6.3	3,462.67	14,344.62	17,813.59
Hammersmith and Fulham	1.05	13,074.42	24,237.82	37,313.29
Haringey	0	1,702.93	13,462.53	15,165.46
Harrow	0	10,728.04	19,812.41	30,540.45
Havering	0	1,458.89	12,698.78	14,157.67
Hillingdon	22.62	572.21	236.22	831.05
Hounslow	2.11	35.47	3,458.3	3,495.88
Islington	14.72	5,073.73	40,688.79	45,777.24
Kensington and Chelsea	0	6,458.5	15,582.88	22,041.38
Kingston	6.32	1,069.61	9,280.85	10,356.78
Lambeth	38.96	6,036.64	83,013.53	89,089.13
Lewisham	5.8	495.74	33,407.54	33,909.08
Newham	0	532.74	24,680.67	25,213.41
Redbridge	10.52	1,236.67	1,186.1	2,433.29
Richmond and Twickenham	7.36	974.05	6,650.53	7,631.94
Southwark	14.71	7,121.64	18,270.64	25,406.99
Sutton and Merton	7.89	6,758.15	896.82	7,662.86
Tower Hamlets	1.05	4,654.57	57,214.34	61,869.96
Waltham, Leyton and Leytonstone	0	484.98	911.11	1,396.09
Wandsworth	27.4	7,473.66	2,642.99	10,144.05
Westminster	4.21	21,500.18	76,190.57	97,694.96

2003—Net ingredient cost

£

	Cough suppressant	Analgesia	Substance dependence	Grand total
Prescriber name	0309010S0	0407020M0	0410000M0	
PCT				
Barking and Dagenham	0	25,720.82	23,495.97	49,216.79
Barnet	71.66	10,961.75	9,515.63	20,549.04
Bexley[1]	20.55	277.5	1,177.49	1,475.54
Bexley Care Trust[1]	0	206.11	422.77	628.88
Brent Teaching	22.14	87,830.96	71,269.33	159,122.43

2003—Net ingredient cost

£

	Cough suppressant	Analgesia	Substance dependence	Grand total
Bromley	8.42	3,211.79	1,438.17	4,658.38
Camden	2.1	5,200.14	29,783.38	34,985.62
Chingford, Wanstead and woodford[2]	2.64	729.51	289.11	1,021.26
City and Hackney Teaching	0	1,424.91	38,069.73	39,494.64
Croydon	45.39	1,306.1	2,842.61	4,194.1
Ealing	1.58	2,031.15	9,558.08	11,590.81
Enfield	12.76	3,115.39	2,593.14	5,721.29
Greenwich Teaching	0	3,501.67	12,485.96	15,987.63
Hammersmith and Fulham	0	7,892.56	22,682.29	30,574.85
Haringey	5.27	1,399.4	12,471.04	13,875.71
Harrow	6.34	8,336.99	20,207.02	28,550.35
Havering	33.71	429.01	15,189.4	15,652.12
Hillingdon	10.54	467.6	620.3	1,098.44
Hounslow	0	47.3	2,814.36	2,861.66
Islington	27.38	4,584.73	44,434.43	49,046.54
Kensington and Chelsea	0	6,547.65	22,093.46	28,641.11
Kingston	0	364.47	8,507.23	8,871.7
Lambeth	57.32	6,001.38	94,585.87	100,644.57
Lewisham	3.16	708.94	31,251.76	31,963.86
Newham	2.11	770.24	22,433.84	23,206.19
Redbridge	8.43	1,618.67	1,414.34	3,041.44
Richmond and Twickenham	15.76	2,003.26	8,859.84	10,878.86
Southwark	8.02	7,758.46	19,802.77	27,569.25
Sutton and Merton	20.03	6,564.47	872.84	7,457.34
Tower Hamlets	5.27	4,077.15	62,874.97	66,957.39
Waltham Forest[2]	1.05	568.67	1,315.16	1,884.88
Waltham, Leyton and Leytonstone[2]	0	133.56	173.18	306.74
Wandsworth	8.43	7,563.94	5,140.56	12,712.93
Westminster	1.05	23,523.52	92,669.4	116,193.97

[1] In October 2003 Bexley PCT became Bexley Care Trust.

[2] In April 2003 the three PCTs, Redbridge, Waltham and Chingford, merged to form Redbridge and Waltham Forest.

2004—Net ingredient cost

£

	Cough suppressant	Analgesia	Substance dependence	Grand total
Prescriber name	0309010S0	0407020M0	0410000M0	
PCT				
Barking and Dagenham	3.16	17,981.04	23,158.83	41,143.03
Barnet	0	8,482.06	11,926.26	20,408.32
Bexley Care Trust	23.1	249.26	978.84	1,251.2
Brent Teaching	8.42	123,041.96	74,523.11	197,573.49
Bromley	10.5	3,071.54	1,135.68	4,217.72
Camden	0	4,311.48	28,187.31	32,498.79
City and Hackney Teaching	0.53	2,057.32	47,714.69	49,772.54
Croydon	14.73	1,438.06	3,553.17	5,005.96
Ealing	3.16	2,187.05	15,216.96	17,407.17
Enfield	21.05	1,078.55	2,711.58	3,811.18
Greenwich Teaching	17.01	4,504.8	10,643.5	15,165.31
Hammersmith and Fulham	0	9,005.75	28,204	37,209.75
Haringey	0	1,474.85	11,634.02	13,108.87
Harrow	0	6,142.04	22,921.46	29,063.5
Havering	31.56	450.38	13,244.76	13,726.7
Hillingdon	0	811.18	2,188.7	2,999.88
Hounslow	5.27	30.51	9,647.03	9,682.81
Islington	19.99	4,446.8	45,748.24	50,215.03
Kensington and Chelsea	0	5,497.62	21,759.26	27,256.88
Kingston	10.54	332.64	7,903.64	8,246.82
Lambeth	6.31	6,883.66	92,719.24	99,609.21
Lewisham	0	956.32	28,919.21	29,875.53
Newham	0	1,006.19	20,405.26	21,411.45
Redbridge	35.84	1,627.32	1,288.38	2,951.54
Richmond and Twickenham	0	3,981.46	11,073.32	15,054.78
Southwark	11.55	6,864.83	24,955.85	31,832.23
Sutton and Merton	24.24	4,403.28	1,010.42	5,437.94
Tower Hamlets	12.63	4,446.28	64,619.93	69,078.84
Waltham Forest	0	322.36	1,503.11	1,825.47
Wandsworth	0	3,802.89	5,822.65	9,625.54
Westminster	0	21,403	102,886.17	124,289.17

Midwives

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures are in place to improve the recruitment and retention of midwives in the NHS. [16658]

Mr. Byrne: A range of initiatives are in place to improve the recruitment and retention of midwives working in the national health service in England. These include improving pay and conditions, encouraging the NHS to become a better, more flexible and diverse employer, help with accessing child care, increasing training, attracting back returners and running national and local recruitment campaigns. As a result of these initiatives, there are over 2,400 more midwives working in the NHS in England than in 1997.

MRSA

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many MRSA infection cases there were in the Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust area in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [17291]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* Statistics on meticillin-resistant *Staphyloccus aureus* (MRSA) figures for April 2000 to March 2001 are not available. The information for MRSA figures at Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals National Health Service Trust for the last four years is shown in the table.

April to March	*Number of MRSA bacteraemia reports*
2001–02	86
2002–03	74
2003–04	107
2004–05	129

Myasthenia Gravis

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the disease myasthenia gravis; and what plans she has to support those who are diagnosed with this disease. [17016]

Mr. Byrne: The Government are sympathetic to the needs of patients with myasthenia gravis and the impact this condition can have on their independence and quality of life.

Patients with myasthenia gravis are able to access a range of national health service and social care services, which are tailored to meet their individual needs, to help them manage their condition. It is for primary care trusts, in consultation with other stakeholders, to determine which services, including those for people with myasthenia gravis, their local populations require and ensure the appropriate provision of these services.

The national service framework (NSF) for long-term conditions is supporting local sustained improvements in service quality for people with long-term neurological conditions, including myasthenia gravis. The NSF addresses a range of key issues including the need for equitable access to a range of services; good quality information and support for patients and carers; the ability to see a specialist and get the right investigations and diagnosis as quickly as possible.

NHS Direct

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the call capacity for NHS Direct has been in each year since it was established; and what the planned call capacity of NHS Direct is in each year until 2010. [12610]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 12 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 984–85W. It is currently forecast that NHS Direct will be answering over eight million calls per year by the end of March 2006. There is no planned call capacity projection beyond 2006.

NHS Trusts

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what reports she has received regarding prospective deficits in NHS trusts in Oxfordshire; and what action her Department has taken to address them. [18051]

Caroline Flint: Like all strategic heath authorities (SHAs), Thames Valley provides regular financial reports to the Department. Thames Valley SHA is responsible for delivering overall financial balance for their local health communities, and works with Oxfordshire trusts to bring the position as close as possible to financial balance.

NICE

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to speed up the appraisals of medicines and technologies undertaken by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. [18350]

Jane Kennedy: We are currently considering proposals from the National Institute of Clinical Excellence for a revised technology appraisal process allowing more rapid appraisal of certain new drugs and health technologies.

North Bristol NHS Trust

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list each of the job titles of staff employed at North Bristol NHS Trust, together with the number of full-time equivalent staff employed in each role. [17032]

Caroline Flint: This information is not collected in the format requested. However, the tables show figures for non-medical staff employed at North Bristol National Health Service Trust by area of work and job description and medical staff by grade and speciality.

NHS hospital and community health services: non-medical staff employed at North Bristol NHS Trust by area of work and by job description as at 30 September 2004

	Full-time equivalents
Total Non-Medical Staff	6,040
Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting Staff	2,125
Qualified Staff	2,095
Manager—Acute, elderly and general	49
Manager—Community services	1
Manager—Maternity services	5
Registered sick children's nurse—Paediatric nursing	30
Registered midwife—Maternity services	195
School nurse	1
Other 1st level—Acute, elderly and general	1,185
Other 1st level—Community psychiatry	1
Other 1st level—Community services	0
Other 1st level—Education staff	8
Other 1st level—Maternity services	13
Other 1st level—Paediatric nursing	15
Other 1st level—School nursing	10
Other 2nd level—Acute, elderly & general	547
Other 2nd level— Community services	5
Other 2nd level—Maternity services	0
Other 2nd level—Paediatric nursing	21
Other 2nd level—School nursing	8
Unqualified Staff	30
Nursery nurse—Acute, elderly & general	20
Nursing assistant/ auxiliary—Acute, elderly & general	5
Nursing assistant/ auxiliary—Paediatric nursing	6
Scientific, Therapeutic and Technical Staff	661
Qualified Staff	593
Manager—Clinical psychology	2
Manager—Dietetics	1
Manager—Occupational therapy	1
Manager—Pharmacy	1
Manager—Speech & language therapy	4
Therapist—Art/ music/ drama therapy	1
Therapist—Dietetics	22
Therapist—Occupational therapy	68
Therapist—Other scientific, therapeutic and technical staff	10
Therapist—Physiotherapy	111
Therapist—Radiography (diagnostic)	110
Therapist—Speech & language therapy	43
Scientist—Clinical psychology	31
Scientist—Other scientific, therapeutic and technical staff	1
Scientist—Pharmacy	42
Scientific officer—Pharmacy	2
Technician—Clinical psychology	3
Technician—Dental	4
Technician—Operating theatres	70
Technician—Other scientific, therapeutic and technical staff	1
Technician—Pharmacy	59
Instructor/teacher—Occupational therapy	7
Unqualified Staff	68
Assistant Practitioner—Clinical psychology	5
Helper/ assistant—Chiropody/Podiatry	0
Helper/ assistant—Occupational therapy	11
Helper/ assistant—Pharmacy	14
Helper/ assistant—Physiotherapy	9
Helper/ assistant—Radiography (diagnostic)	21
Helper/ assistant—Speech & language therapy	7
Student/ trainee—Pharmacy	1
Healthcare Scientists	520
Qualified Staff	367
Consultant Clinical Scientist—(Grade C) Clinical Biochemistry	1
Managers—Genetics	1
Clinical Scientist (Grade A & B)—Cardiology	1
Clinical Scientist (Grade A & B)—Clinical Biochemistry	7
Clinical Scientist (Grade A & B)—Cyto/Histopathology	1
Clinical Scientist (Grade A & B)—Genetics	60
Clinical Scientist (Grade A & B)—Haematology including Transfusion Science	1
Clinical Scientist (Grade A & B)—Maxillofacial Prosthetics	1
Clinical Scientist (Grade A & B)—Microbiology	11
Clinical Scientist (Grade A & B)—Other Life Sciences	1
Clinical Scientist (Grade A & B)—Radiotherapy Physics	2
MLSO/Biomedical Scientist—Clinical Biochemistry	47

NHS hospital and community health services: non-medical staff employed at North Bristol NHS Trust by area of work and by job description as at 30 September 2004

	Full-time equivalents
MLSO/Biomedical Scientist—Cyto/Histopathology	30
MLSO/Biomedical Scientist—Genetics	2
MLSO/Biomedical Scientist—Haematology including Transfusion Science	35
MLSO/Biomedical Scientist—Microbiology	32
MLSO/Biomedical Scientist—Other Life Sciences	5
MTO/Technician—Audiology	15
MTO/Technician—Cardiology	9
MTO/Technician—Cyto/Histopathology	5
MTO/Technician—Equipment Management & Development	21
MTO/Technician—Genetics	5
MTO/Technician—Neurophysiology	11
MTO/Technician—Other Healthcare Science Professions	1
MTO/Technician—Other Life Sciences	12
MTO/Technician—Other Physical Sciences	1
MTO/Technician—Rehabilitation Engineering	39
MTO/Technician—Renal Dialysis	8
Cyto-screener—Cyto/Histopathology	2
Unqualified Staff	153
MLA/ATO/Assistant—Audiology	2
MLA/ATO/Assistant—Cardiology	13
MLA/ATO/Assistant—Clinical Biochemistry	13
MLA/ATO/Assistant—Cyto/Histopathology	26
MLA/ATO/Assistant—Genetics	2
MLA/ATO/Assistant—Haematology including Transfusion Science	5
MLA/ATO/Assistant—Microbiology	6
MLA/ATO/Assistant—Neurophysiology	3
MLA/ATO/Assistant Other—Healthcare Science Professions	47
MLA/ATO/Assistant Other Life Sciences	12
MLA/ATO/Assistant—Rehabilitation Engineering	5
MLA/ATO/Assistant—Renal Dialysis	3
Student/Trainee—Clinical Biochemistry	8
Student/Trainee—Cyto/Histopathology	7
Student/Trainee—Haematology including Transfusion Science	2
Administration and Estates Staff	1,376
Senior manager—Central functions	53
Senior manager—Clinical support	4
Senior manager—Hotel & property	4
Senior manager—Scientific, therapeutic & technical support	1
Manager—Central functions	63
Manager—Clinical support	24
Manager—Hotel & property	10
Manager—Scientific, therapeutic & technical support	3
Clerical & administrative—Central functions	687
Clerical & administrative Clinical support	278
Clerical & administrative—Hotel, property & estates	52
Clerical & administrative Scientific, therapeutic & technical support	102
Estates (Maintenance & works)—Hotel, property & estates	94
Healthcare Assistants and Other Support Staff	1,358
HCA—Acute, elderly, general	692
HCA—Community services	4
HCA—Maternity	42
HCA—Paediatrics	29
HCA—Speech & language therapy	1
Support worker—Acute, elderly, general	29
Support worker—Central functions	129
Support worker—Community services	1
Support worker—Hotel, property & estates	413
Support worker—Maternity	7
Support worker—Radiography	12

Note:

Full-time equivalent figures are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Source:

Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census 2004.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS) medical and dental staff: within North Bristol NHS Trust by grade and specialty

As at 30 September 2004	*Full-time equivalents*
All medical and dental staff	675
Of which:	
Consultant	243
Accident and emergency	7
Anaesthetics (inc. Intensive care)	54
Cardiology	6
Chemical pathology	2
Child and adolescent psychiatry	4
Clinical neurophysiology	2
Clinical radiology	21
Endocrinology and diabetes mellitus	3
Gastroenterology	4
General Psychiatry	4
General surgery	15
Geriatric medicine	7
Haematology	4
Histopathology	10
Immunology	3
Infectious diseases	1
Medical microbiology & virology	5
Neurology	6
Neurosurgery	9
Obstetrics and gynaecology	8
Oral & maxillo facial surgery	3
Otolaryngology	5
Paediatrics	16
Palliative medicine	3
Plastic surgery	9
Renal medicine	7
Respiratory medicine	5
Rheumatology	5
Trauma and orthopaedic surgery	12
Urology	5
Associate Specialist/ Staff Grade	34
Accident and emergency	4
Anaesthetics (inc. Intensive care)	4
Chemical pathology	1
Child and adolescent psychiatry	1
General Psychiatry	2
General surgery	2
Haematology	1
Histopathology	1
Infectious diseases	1
Neurology	1
Obstetrics and gynaecology	2
Oral & maxillo facial surgery	1
Otolaryngology	1
Paediatrics	6
Plastic surgery	1
Trauma and orthopaedic surgery	2
Urology	2
ZZ Other	5
Registrar Group	162
Accident and emergency	6
Anaesthetics (inc. Intensive care)	20
Cardiology	2
Chemical pathology	1
Child and adolescent psychiatry	2
Clinical radiology	4
Endocrinology and diabetes mellitus	2
Gastroenterology	3
General surgery	12
Geriatric medicine	5
Haematology	2
Histopathology	6
Immunology	2
Medical microbiology & virology	4
Neurology	4
Neurosurgery	7
Obstetrics and gynaecology	13
Oral & maxillo facial surgery	1
Otolaryngology	5
Paediatrics	15
Palliative medicine	2
Plastic surgery	9
Renal medicine	7
Respiratory medicine	6
Rheumatology	2
Trauma and orthopaedic surgery	12
Urology	9
Senior House Officer	188
Accident and emergency	11
Anaesthetics (inc. Intensive care)	25
Child and adolescent psychiatry	1
General surgery	16
Geriatric medicine	1
Medical microbiology & virology	2
Neurology	8
Neurosurgery	4
Obstetrics and gynaecology	16
Oral & maxillo facial surgery	5
Otolaryngology	7
Paediatrics	15
Plastic surgery	9
Renal medicine	8
Rheumatology	1
Trauma and orthopaedic surgery	21
Urology	3
ZZ Other	36
House Officer	43
General surgery	11
Paediatrics	1
Trauma and orthopaedic surgery	4
Urology	2
ZZ Other	25
Hospital Practitioner /Clinical Assistant	4
Accident and emergency	0
General surgery	0
Neurology	1
Obstetrics and gynaecology	0
Trauma and orthopaedic surgery	0
Urology	1
ZZ Other	2
Other CHS Staff	2
Paediatrics	1
Public health medicine	2

Note:
'0' denotes less than one, more than zero.
Source:
NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre medical and dental workforce census.

Pregnancy (Low-lying Placenta)

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment *(a)* she and *(b)* the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence have made of the merits of providing pregnant women at risk with a low lying placenta screening for vasa praevia concurrently with their standard ultrasound examination; [16609]

(2) what research her Department has undertaken into the early diagnosis of vasa praevia in *(a)* all pregnant women and *(b)* pregnant women with a low-lying placenta; and if she will make a statement; [16610]

(3) if she will meet the Burton Hospital Trust to discuss their procedures for the diagnosis of vasa praevia in pregnant women; [16611]

(4) what discussions she has had with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence with regard to the diagnosis of vasa praevia in pregnant women; and if she will make a statement. [16612]

Mr. Byrne: As vasa praevia is a very rare condition and technically difficult to detect, even for a highly skilled ultrasonographer with the appropriate specialist equipment (a colour Doppler scanner), routine screening of all pregnant women for vasa praevia is not currently advocated by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. Neither the national screening committee nor the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) have made any assessments into screening for this condition.

The Department has not undertaken any research into the early diagnosis of vasa praevia.

I currently have no plans to meet the Burton Hospital Trust to discuss their procedures for the diagnosis of vasa praevia in pregnant women. This is an issue for the trust, which should be informed by best medical practice.

The Department has not had any discussions with NICE with regard to the diagnosis of vasa praevia in pregnant women. We have no plans to refer the topic of vasa praevia to NICE at this time.

Prescriptions (Pre-payment Certificates)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many pre-payment certificates for prescriptions have been issued in London in each of the last 12 months. [16905]

Jane Kennedy: Information on the number of pre-payment certificates (PPCs) issued for London is not separately identifiable. However, the number of PPCs issued for England, by month for each of the last 12 months is shown in the table.

	Month	*Number of PPCs*
2004	October	92,845
2004	November	83,363
2004	December	73,876
2005	January	95,978
2005	February	81,638
2005	March	125,477
2005	April	97,265
2005	May	82,803
2005	June	96,670
2005	July	91,852
2005	August	83,077
2005	September	86,549

Pressure Sores

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of progress against the NHS targets of a 5 per cent. reduction in incidence of pressure sores per annum; what figures she has collected on the incidence of pressure sores since instigation of the target; and if she will make a statement. [16567]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 231W.

Primary Care Trusts

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the financial outturn for each primary care trust in England was in 2004–05; and if she will make a statement. [16583]

Mr. Byrne: The 2004–05 final outturn figures for each primary care trust in England have been placed in the Library. These figures have been taken from the 2004–05 final accounts.

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many primary care trusts that inherited deficits of *(a)* £1 million to £1.999 million, *(b)* £2 million to £2.999 million, *(c)* £3 million to £3.999 million, *(d)* £4 million to £4.999 million and *(e)* over £5 million from their primary care groups have since come out of deficit; and if she will make a statement; [15535]

(2) what deficit each primary care trust in England inherited from its primary care group; and if she will make a statement. [15537]

Mr. Byrne: Information on any deficits inherited by primary care trusts from primary care groups is not collected centrally.

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total funding of primary care organisations has been in each year since 2001, broken down by Government office region; and if she will make a statement. [15536]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Private Finance Initiative

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 20 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 798–800W, on the private finance initiative, what total value of assets and liabilities for each of the listed private finance initiatives and public private partnerships is recorded on the Government Balance Sheet; what proportion of assets and liabilities is listed; what the accounting treatment is for assets and liabilities; and whether it is compatible with *(a)* generally-accepted accounting practices and *(b)* international financial reporting standards. [15961]

Mr. Byrne: National health service accountants and their auditors, who are independent, determine the correct accounting treatment of their organisations' private finance initiative (PFI)/public-private partnership deals by applying independently set "United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice" (UKGAAP).

In particular, accountants are required to apply FRS5, "Reporting the Substance of Transactions" and SSAP21, "Leases and Hire Purchase Contracts", and are directed to these standards by chapter eight of the NHS capital accounting manual. Their conclusions are checked through the mandatory independent audit of trust and primary care trust (PCT) financial statements.

National accounts, upon which the fiscal rules are judged, follow the same UKGAAP accounting treatment. Where an asset is provided under a contract that is judged as being off-balance sheet (for example, through a PFI contract or operating lease) then the capital value is not included in measures of public spending but the annual payments do score as public expenditure.

International accounting standards are not currently applicable to the UK public sector, though the financial reporting advisory board is keeping this position under review.

The answer of 20 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 798–800W, listed schemes of three different types; PFI, NHS local improvement finance trust (LIFT) and independent sector treatment centres (ISTCs), each being a very different type of transaction.

PFI schemes

On the list, five schemes are judged as being "on-balance sheet" and will appear on their trusts' balance sheets. Individual NHS trust accounts are not currently consolidated within the Department's resource accounts. NHS trust accounts are, however, brought together in the NHS trust summarised account, which is audited and published by the National Audit Office.

The amounts capitalised are listed in the table. On the opposite side of each trust's balance sheet, there is a corresponding creditor representing amounts expected to be payable in the future.

Commissioning body	*Source*	*Capital value on balance sheet (£000)*
Buckinghamshire Hospitals NHS Trust	2004–05 accounts	44,562
Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust	2004–05 accounts	114,909
Queen Mary's Hospital Sidcup NHS Trust	2004–05 accounts	4,500
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	Estimated	42,473
Oxleas NHS Trust	2004–05 accounts	17,612

NHS LIFT schemes

In NHS LIFT schemes, facilities to be made available to the NHS are owned by a local LIFT company and, in accordance with the accounting standards, NHS accountants and their independent auditors treat them as off balance sheet.

The Department does, however, own a small amount of equity in local LIFT companies through PCTs. Amounts of equity listed in PCTs' accounts are listed in the table. In this case, the corresponding creditor is to the general fund.

	PCTs owning equity	*Amount (£000)*
Operational NHS LIFT schemes		
Barnsley	Barnsley PCT	143
Ashton, Leigh and Wigan	Ashton, Leigh and Wigan PCT	606
Norfolk	North Norfolk PCT	014
	Southern Norfolk PCT	014
	West Norfolk PCT	014
Newcastle and North Tyne	Newcastle PCT	136
	North Tyneside PCT	097
East Lancashire	Burnley, Pendle and Ros[illegible] PCT	353
	Hyndburn and Ribble [illegible]CT	352
	Blackburn and Dar[illegible] PCT	352
Rowley Regis and Tipton PCT		102
Wednesbury and West Bromwich PCT		102
Oldbury and Smethwick PCT		102
Barking and Havering	Barking and Dagenham PCT	202
	Havering PCT	202
Liverpool and Sefton	South Sefton PCT	044
	North Liverpool PCT	050
	South Liverpool PCT	050
	Central Liverpool PCT	050
NHS LIFT schemes under construction		
Camden and Islington	Camden PCT	031
	Islington PCT	092
Manchester, Salford and Trafford	Salford PCT	050
	South Manchester PCT	264
	Trafford North PCT	088
Birmingham and Solihull	Eastern Birmingham PCT	039
	Heart of Birmingham PCT	040
	North Birmingham PCT	039
	South Birmingham PCT	040
	Solihull PCT	042

	PCTs owning equity	Amount (£000)
Bradford	Bradford City PCT	112
	Airedale PCT	112
	Bradford South and West PCT	112
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	West of Cornwall PCT	001
	Central Cornwall PCT	041
	North and East Cornwall PCT	047
Hull	East Hull PCT	222
	West Hull PCT	239
Leicester City	Leicester City West PCT	136
	Eastern Leicester PCT	136
North Staffordshire	North Stoke PCT	050
	South Stoke PCT	087
	Staffs Moorlands PCT	003
	Newcastle-under-Lyme	003
Redbridge and Waltham Forest	Redbridge PCT	210
	Waltham Forest PCT	210
Barnet, Enfield and Haringey	Haringey PCT	007
	Enfield PCT	001
	Barnet PCT	000
Brent, Harrow and Hillingdon	Brent PCT	074
	Hillingdon PCT	074
Bristol	Bristol South and West PCT	155
	Bristol North PCT	155
Bromley, Bexley and Greenwich	Bromley PCT	146
	Bexley PCT	146
	Greenwich PCT	170
Colchester and Tendring	Colchester PCT	175
	Tendring PCT	175
Ealing, Hammersmith and Hounslow	Ealing PCT	213
	Hammersmith and Fulham PCT	213
	Hounslow PCT	212
East Hampshire, Fareham and Gosport	East Hampshire PCT	091
	Fareham and Gosport PCT	091
Greater Nottingham	Gedling PCT	186
	Nottingham PCT	221
	Broxtowe and Hucknall PCT	283
	Rushcliffe PCT	001
Leeds	Leeds West PCT	042
	Leeds North West PCT	042
	Leeds North East PCT	042
	East Leeds PCT	045
	South Leeds PCT	042
Oldham	Oldham PCT	057
Oxford City	Oxford PCT	410
Plymouth	Plymouth PCT	392
Southern Derbyshire	Derby Dales and South Derbyshire PCT	070
	Amber Valley PCT	070
	Erewash PCT	070
	Greater Derby PCT	070
	Central Derby PCT	070
St. Helens and Knowsley	St. Helens PCT	090
	Knowsley PCT	090
	Halton PCT	090
	Warrington PCT	096

	PCTs owning equity	Amount (£000)
Tees Valley	Middlesbrough PCT	001
	Hartlepool PCT	001
	North Tees PCT	123
	Durham Dales PCT	001
Wolverhampton	Wolverhampton PCT	184
	Walsall PCT	115

ISTCs

ISTC contracts principally involve the provision of health services to NHS patients, with the capital investment being largely incidental.

The estimated capital costs of the schemes listed in the answer of 20 June sum to around £228 million and are funded by the private sector. Under the relevant accounting standards, these schemes are generally viewed as on-balance sheet. Capital costs will therefore appear as assets on the commissioning authorities' balance sheets, with a corresponding creditor representing amounts that may become due to the private sector.

Protection of Vulnerable People

Ms Angela C. Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* referrals, *(b)* provisional listings and *(c)* confirmed listings have been made to the (i) Protection of Children Act and (ii) Protection of Vulnerable Adults list since it was established. [15504]

Mr. Byrne: The figures for referrals, provisional listings and confirmed listings made to the protection of vulnerable adults (POVA) since they were established are shown in the table. Responsibility for referrals to the Protection of Children Act list rests with my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education and Skills.

	POVA
Number of referrals	2,520
Provisional listings	710
Of which:	
Primary[1]	642
Secondary[2]	68
Confirmed listings	197
Of which:	
Primary[1]	97
Secondary[2]	100

[1] Primary listings are those made direct to the POVA list.
[2] Secondary listings are cross-referrals from the Protection of Children Act list to the POVA list.
Note:
As at 31 August 2005
818 cases have been closed either because the referral was inappropriate, or because they did not meet the criteria for listing.
795 cases are being actively considered for listing.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Carbon Emissions

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the effect on UK carbon emissions of the switch in electricity generation from gas to coal during the winter of 2004–05. [16302]

Malcolm Wicks: Total coal generation during the three coldest months of 2004–05 increased by around 1.2TWh compared with the same period a year earlier. Generation from gas fell by a similar amount. A switch of generation of this size would be equivalent to an increase in CO_2 emissions of 0.2MtC, or approximately 0.1 per cent. of current annual UK emissions.

Clean Coal Technology

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research has been commissioned by his Department into clean coal technology and carbon sequestration since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [16535]

Malcolm Wicks: A considerable amount of research has been commissioned by the Department since 1997 on clean coal technology and carbon sequestration. The results of this work, with copies of the studies undertaken, can be found at the Cleaner Fossil Fuel Technology's website at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/coal/cfft/index.shtml. The culmination of this research has resulted in the publication of the Carbon Abatement Technology Strategy for Fossil Fuel Use which was published on 14 June 2005. Copies of this are available in the Libraries of the House as well as on the website above. At the time of the strategy's publication I also announced some £25 million in capital grants for a demonstration of carbon abatement technologies. We expect to identify suitable demonstration projects early in 2006.

Copyright

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent developments there have been in his policy on the extension of the term of copyright protection granted in the EU to the creators of sound recordings; and if he will make a statement. [16981]

Alan Johnson: The issue of term of protection for sound recordings is complex and is harmonized at EU level, so any changes would need to be agreed at that level. With this in mind, the Government have agreed to commission a study into the optimal term of protection for sound recordings and performers' rights. We are in the final stages of agreeing terms of reference and appointing an appropriate person to lead the study and hope it will be under way shortly. Once we have the results of the study we will be in a position to make decisions on the correct policy for the UK.

Dynamic Teleswitch Meters

Mark Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many dynamically teleswitched meters there are in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* Wales. [15187]

Malcolm Wicks: There are 228,000 Dynamically Switched Meters (DSMs) in Scotland. No data is available for England and Wales.

Mark Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he has taken to ensure consumers with dynamically teleswitched meters are able to choose their electricity supplier; and if he will make a statement. [15188]

Malcolm Wicks: The regulation of electricity metering is the responsibility of the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem). I understand that the Chief Executive of OFGEM will write directly to my hon. Friend about this issue.

Electricity/Gas Supplies

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of the UK's electricity supply is projected to come from gas by 2010; and what percentage of the gas needed is expected to be supplied by each country from which gas is expected to be imported in 2010. [16415]

Malcolm Wicks: According to the latest DTI energy projections, around 41 per cent. of electricity supply could be provided by natural gas in 2010.

The Department does not make estimates of gas import needs for individual sectors such as power stations. Its most recent assessment of gas import needs for the whole economy is that by 2010 around a third of annual UK demand is likely to be met by imported gas. A variety of potential sources of supply are expected to be available by 2010—including pipelines from Norway, Belgium, The Netherlands and facilities to receive cargoes of liquefied natural gas which could originate from several producing countries—but the ultimate sources of that gas will be for the market to determine.

Energy Prices

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the change in energy prices has been in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* the rest of the EU in each of the last 10 years; on factors account for those changes; and if he will make a statement. [18204]

Malcolm Wicks: Energy prices for the EU15 and the UK in cash terms for the last 10 years is as follows.

Industrial and domestic gas and electricity prices in the UK and the EU15 1995–2004

Pence per kWh[2]

	Including taxes[1]							
	Industrial Electricity		*Industrial Gas*		*Domestic Electricity*		*Domestic Gas*	
	UK	*Rest of EU Median*[3]	*UK*	*Rest of EU Median*[3]	*UK*	*Rest of EU Median*[3]	*UK*	*Rest of EU Median*[3]
1995	4.34	4.73	0.69	0.88	8.06	10.65	1.79	2.60
1996	4.19	4.67	0.51	0.93	8.04	10.88	1.80	2.58
1997	3.95	3.87	0.54	0.84	7.64	8.86	1.78	2.24
1998	3.92	3.74	0.56	0.77	7.29	9.30	1.72	2.14
1999	3.94	3.51	0.57	0.74	7.20	8.31	1.71	2.04
2000	3.66	2.99	0.61	0.98	7.06	7.90	1.66	2.04
2001	3.53	3.56	0.86	1.08	6.99	7.85	1.71	2.20
2002	3.46	3.24	0.84	1.04	7.02	8.03	1.82	2.18
2003	3.35	3.99	0.87	1.20	7.09	8.81	1.85	2.64
2004	3.66	5.07	0.95	1.25	7.52	9.57	1.99	2.56
Difference 1995–2004 per cent.	-15.7	+7.2	+37.7	+42.9	-6.7	-10.1	+11.2	-1.5

[1] Prices include all taxes where not refundable on purchase
[2] Prices converted to pounds sterling using annual average exchange rates
[3] Based on the remaining 14 EU member countries excluding accession countries.
Note:
Where national prices are not available, data for the following cities have been used instead: Austria: Vienna, France: Paris, Germany: Dusseldorf, Greece: Athens, Ireland: Dublin, Netherlands: Rotterdam, Portugal: Lisbon, Spain: Madrid
Source:
Derived from the International Energy Agency publication, Energy Prices and Taxes Q2 2005

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department is taking to help businesses cope with increased energy prices. [18205]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government take the recent increases in energy prices very seriously, and particularly their impact on the competitiveness of UK industry. In January this year my Department set up the Gas Prices Working Group with the Energy Intensive Users' Group and Ofgem, with the remit of examining the workings of the gas market and developing ideas for improving its operation. The group has now agreed a list of action points for the short to medium term, such as maximising gas supplies, encouraging demand side response and pursuing energy market liberalisation in the EU.

Gas is a substantial component of the UK fuel mix in electricity generation, so the movement in the gas price is probably the largest factor behind electricity price increases. The EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) is also having an impact on electricity prices. We recognise that some business stakeholders have argued for greater simplicity and streamlining of instruments aimed at the business sector in the wake of the EU ETS. This will be an important consideration in the Government's deliberations during the current review of the climate change programme.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the average cost in the United Kingdom is of 900 litres of home heating oil; and what that figure was in 2003–04. [18538]

Malcolm Wicks: The average cost of 900 litres of standard grade burning oil in August 2005 was £288.72. This compares with £158.13 in 2003 and £191.34 in 2004.

Energy Research

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much the Government has provided for research into non-hydrocarbon energies, broken down by type, since 1997. [16843]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer the hon. Member to my answer given on 1 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2263W to the hon. Member for Leominster (Bill Wiggin).

Ethanol

Linda Gilroy: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent assessment he has made of the contribution which the production of ethanol can make to meeting UK energy requirements in the context of a sustained higher price for oil. [17367]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* The department has, alongside other government departments, been assessing the feasibility of options to introduce "bioethanol" as a transport fuel extender in the context of meeting the requirements of the EU biofuels directive, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and more general security of fuel supply. The above study will feed into the government's Climate Change Program Review due to report by year end.

Gas-powered Energy

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the proportion of gas-powered energy generation that will come from *(a)* natural gas and *(b)* liquid natural gas in (i) five years, (ii) 10 years and (iii) 20 years. [15617]

Malcolm Wicks: DTI projections do not distinguish between natural gas and LNG. The percentages of electricity projected to be supplied in the UK from gas-fired power stations in the years 2010, 2015 and 2020 are 41 per cent., 47 per cent. and 58 per cent. respectively. The latest DTI energy projections are available electronically at: http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/sepn/uep_addendum.pdf

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the operational liquid natural gas importation terminals in the UK; and what the capacity of each is. [15619]

Malcolm Wicks: A liquid natural gas import terminal at the Isle of Grain, on the Thames Estuary, was commissioned this summer; it has the capacity to import approximately 13 mcm/day. Two further LNG import terminals are under development at Milford Haven; details are to be found in my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's "First Report to Parliament on Security of Gas and Electricity Supply in Great Britain", published in July 2005, and available on the DTI web-site at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/publications/policy/sec_supply_first_report.pdf.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the required liquid natural gas importation capacity for the UK over the next *(a)* five and *(b)* 15 years. [15620]

Malcolm Wicks: The UK will require increasing amounts of imported gas as production form the North Sea declines. However, it a commercial matter for individual companies to decide whether to import gas through liquefied natural gas import terminals or through pipelines.

The Joint Energy Security of Supply Working Group monitors predicted supply and demand for gas up to 2013. This is reported in my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's "First Report to Parliament on Security of Gas and Electricity Supply in Great Britain", published in July 2005. It is available on the DTI website at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/publications/policy/sec_supply_first_report;pdf.

Graveney Sub-station

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether his Department has discussed with London Array Ltd. the proposed electricity sub-station at Graveney; and if he will make a statement. [18506]

Malcolm Wicks: Officials in the Department have had discussions with London Array Ltd on a range of issues connected with proposals for a wind farm in the Thames Estuary including the timing of possible outages associated with the proposed substation, should planning permission be obtained. Planning permission for the proposed substation is, however, a matter for the relevant local planning authority.

Ministerial Advice

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he has taken to ensure that *(a)* he and *(b)* the Energy Minister has access to advice on energy matters from sources other than his officials. [17150]

Malcolm Wicks: My right hon. Friend and I draw advice about energy matters from a wide range of sources. The Sustainable Energy Policy Advisory Board was set up shortly after publication of the Energy White Paper to give expert independent advice to Ministers on energy policy. Notes of their membership and their discussions are available on the Department's website.

There are similarly a range of other bodies and groups that provide us with advice on more specific areas of energy policy, such as the Renewables Advisory Board; the Coal Authority; the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority; the oil and gas industry/Government forum, PILOT; Ofgem and Energywatch to name a few.

We also occasionally commission specific studies from experts in the private sector according to need, for example those that informed the recent Renewables Innovation Review which are also available on the Department's website.

North Sea Energy Industry

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures are being taken to extend oil and gas production in the North Sea beyond 2020. [16412]

Malcolm Wicks: We are implementing a range of initiatives to maintain North Sea investment and activity and prolong the life of the UK Continental Shelf to 2020 and beyond, many of these in co-operation with PILOT, the oil and gas task force. Initiatives currently include enhancing the licensing regime, improving the commercial climate and access to infrastructure, freeing up fallow acreage, and finding ways to maximise production from existing "brown" fields. We are seeing successes, but must not be complacent. We will therefore continue to work with the industry to find ways to meet all the challenges which emerge as the province continues to mature.

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many jobs are estimated to be directly dependent upon North Sea energies industries. [16414]

Malcolm Wicks: Current estimates indicate that North Sea energy industries support around 260,000 UK jobs, of which some 30,000 are directly employed by oil and gas exploration and production companies.

Nuclear Energy

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much his Department spent on research into nuclear energy technologies in *(a)* 2005 and *(b)* each of the previous five years. [17903]

Malcolm Wicks: The expenditure on nuclear energy technology research from 1999 to 2005 is set out in the tables as follows.

Nuclear spend 2000–05 fission and fusion R&D

Expenditure by the EPSRC on nuclear fission research are given in the table as follows:

Financial year	*Nuclear fission (£ million)*
1999–2000	62,000
2000–01	128,000
2001–02	325,000
2002–03	307,000
2003–04	212,000
2004–05	125,000

Figures for direct Government expenditure (but not including spending by the Research Councils) on nuclear fission are given in the table as follows:

Financial year	*Nuclear fission (£ million)*
1999–2000	2.5
2000–01	0
2001–02	2
2002–03	2.1
2003–04	2.1
2004–05	2.2

Note:
Expenditure in support of Meteorological Office emergency response arrangements currently accounts for approximately £2.1 million.

Figures for nuclear fusion R&D are given in the table as follows:

Financial year	*Nuclear fusion (£ million)*
1999–2000	14.3
2000–01	17.0
2001–02	14.4
2002–03	14.6
2003–04	15.6
2004–05	19.5

Notes:
1. Figures from 1999–2000 to 2001–02 are from the Fusion Programme Letter funded by DTI and for 2002–03 and 2003–04 are the allocations from OST and EPSRC.
2. The peak in 2000–01 were due to changes in invoicing arrangements.
3. The UK's indirect contribution to the European fusion programme, via central European Union funding for the EURATOM Framework Programme, is excluded.

Nuclear Power

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the costs of security for UK civil nuclear reactors was in each year since 1975, broken down by the costs of *(a)* hiring private sector security personnel to protect reactor facilities, *(b)* mobilising UK armed forces and police forces to protect reactor facilities, *(c)* testing the security of reactor facilities, *(d)* monitoring the security of reactor facilities and *(e)* assessing the security of reactor facilities. [15694]

Malcolm Wicks: Such cost figures are not collated centrally. Responsibility for security measures, and for meeting their costs, rests with the operators. Responsibility for ensuring that nuclear operators provide adequate and robust security is regulated by the Office for Civil Nuclear Security. The costs of this regulation, borne by the industry, can be found in the Director of Civil Nuclear Security's recently published fourth annual report, which is available in the Libraries of the House.

The ownership and management arrangements for civil nuclear reactors, as well as the number in operation, have changed significantly since 1975. The arrangements and the organisations involved in assuring and monitoring civil nuclear security have also changed. Importantly, the threat, especially from terrorism, has changed. Security measures and procedures have had to adapt to meet the changing situation.

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he expects a White Paper to be issued on the future of nuclear power in the United Kingdom. [16416]

Malcolm Wicks: My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister recently announced that the Government would bring forward proposals on energy policy next year. The analysis of options will include an assessment of civil nuclear power. Government have stated that before any decision to proceed with the building of new nuclear power stations, there would need to be the fullest public consultation and the publication of a White Paper setting out the Government's proposals.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list EU countries *(a)* which have indicated a commitment to an increase in the number of nuclear fission plants and *(b)* which have a policy to phase out nuclear power generation. [17186]

Malcolm Wicks: Finland and France have announced their intention to build new reactors, but we do not hold information on the current policy of other member states.

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if his Department will require the Department for Trade and Industry to segregate accounts relating to *(a)* commercial activities and *(b)* decommissioning activities of the nuclear power sectors. [17284]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) assumed responsibility for the decommissioning and clean up of the UK's civil nuclear legacy on 1 April 2005 and has responsibility for nuclear sites (20 in all) previously operated by UKAEA and BNFL. The NDA's funding is about £2.2 billion per annum: half of this is from Her Majesty's Treasury and half commercial income derived from continued plant operations (Magnox nuclear power stations, fuel production and nuclear fuel reprocessing at Sellafield). The NDA will ensure transparency in its accounts for 2005–06 in respect of nuclear clean up, and commercial activities. Information relating to British Energy and British Nuclear Fuels plc is set out in their respective accounts which follow UK GAAP disciplines.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the lifecycle carbon emissions of a nuclear fission plant; and if he will make a statement. [17345]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has undertaken no assessment of the lifecycle carbon emissions of a nuclear fission plant.

Ocean-generated Energy

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment the Government have made of the Ocean WaveMaster Ltd. technology for energy generation, trialled by Manchester university; and what further resources are available for more extensive ocean trials. [15025]

Malcolm Wicks: The Ocean WaveMaster Ltd. technology has been assessed under the DTI's Technology Programme.

The Technology Programme www.dti.gov.uk/technologyprogramme provides grant funding for the research, development and demonstration of wave and tidal stream technologies up to and including single full-scale prototype. Since 1999 around £25 million has been committed to this area.

In addition, the DTI's Wave and Tidal Stream Energy Demonstration Scheme (subject to state aids approval)

www.dti.gov.uk/renewables/business_pdfs/waveandtidalstreamdemonstrationscheme.pdf

will provide £42 million to support the first multi-device wave and tidal stream demonstrations.

Oil Prices

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what forecast has been made of oil barrel prices by the International Energy Agency in each year since 1980; and what the actual price was for each year for which forecasts had been made. [17183]

Malcolm Wicks: The IEA does not forecast prices. The IEA publishes forecasts of the fundamentals which could influence the price of a barrel of crude oil, such as the balance of supply and demand. This is as part of its remit to encourage transparent markets to ensure it functions in an efficient and stable manner.

However, the IEA does produce medium and long term supply and demand forecasts based on price scenarios, where the balance of supply and demand are examined under different price assumptions. These scenarios take into account the current price, together with the cost of production and prospects for economic growth, but do not represent a price forecast.

Patent Applications

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the Government's policy is on patent applications that may threaten national security. [15378]

Alan Johnson: Patents legislation allows Government to withhold from publication any patent application that it considers contains information which might be prejudicial to national security or public safety.

Power Lines (Burial Costs)

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent estimate he has made of the cost of burying power lines in England and Wales. [17249]

Malcolm Wicks: To bury the high voltage transmission system would cost approximately £109,000 million. The cost to underground the associated distribution networks would additionally be in the order of £32,000 million. The total cost would therefore be in the order of £141,000 million. Other additional costs due to the re-engineering of the existing system to accommodate only underground cables would further inflate these figures.

Private Finance Initiatives

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what steps he is taking to ensure that the private finance initiative projects for which his Department is responsible create the minimum of environmental damage; [16254]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the sustainability and environmental impacts of *(a)* the private finance initiative projects for which his Department is responsible and *(b)* the effectiveness of the private finance initiative process in delivering environmentally sustainable projects for his Department; [16255]

(3) what plans he has to make private finance initiative contracts for which his Department is responsible more accountable and transparent in terms of environmental sustainability. [16256]

Alan Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 25 May 2005, *Official Report*, column 1496W, to the hon. Member for Lewes (Mr. Baker) that sets out the Government's policy on sustainability in relation to PFI/PPP projects. This is the policy that the Department would follow for future PFI/PPP projects.

The Department is responsible for long standing PFI/PPP projects—one relating to the Department's IT provision (Elgar) and the other a concession agreement (Constructionline) to operate a prequalification service for companies wishing to undertake public sector construction work. Currently it has no plans for future PFI/PPP projects.

In regard to Elgar, the Department's agreement with the PFI provider includes a green housekeeping policy that defines the mechanisms for ensuring environmental sustainability. This is followed by the PFI provider when undertaking is procurement activities under the agreement. The provider has programmes in place to ensure that the most environmentally friendly products are provided to the market place. It has a formal policy to address disposal and recycling of IT equipment that complies with EU Directives and EN ISO 9001–2000. In relation to Constructionline, the prequalification questionnaire asks companies to provide details of their environmental policies and any quality standards met so that clients can take these details into account in establishing long and short lists for tenders.

The Department is satisfied that the processes in place for its current projects meet environmental objectives.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the Answer of 13 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 83W, on private finance projects, what total value of assets and liabilities for each of the listed private finance initiatives and public private partnerships is recorded on the Government Balance Sheet; what proportion of assets and liabilities is listed; what the accounting treatment is for assets and liabilities; and whether it is compatible with *(a)* generally-accepted accounting practices and *(b)* international financial reporting standards. [15962]

Alan Johnson: The two PFI projects for which my Department is responsible do not appear on the Department's (and therefore the Government's) balance sheet. The balance sheet treatment of the Department's PFI/PPP projects is determined by the National Audit Office following Generally Accepted

Accounting Practice, in accordance with Financial Reporting Standards issued by the independent Accounting Standards Board.

Renewable Energy

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government are taking to encourage and promote the use of renewable energy in Bedfordshire; and if he will make a statement. [16627]

Malcolm Wicks: Renewables East is the agency which promotes renewable energy in the East of England and is supported by the East of England Development Agency and the DTI. Renewables East has a dedicated programme to develop and promote renewables in the region and to harness the associated economic benefits. With particular reference to Bedfordshire, Renewables East as part of the DTI Its Only Natural campaign held an event with each local authority in 2006. Renewables East is closely linked to the Green Business Network in Bedfordshire which was established this year, and of course the Government have introduced the Renewable Obligation, which is a market-based mechanism for the support of the renewables sector.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what his policy is on the creation of a grid to link different countries in respect of the generation of offshore renewable energy. [17147]

Malcolm Wicks: The DTI commissioned a report looking at the most economic cable connections for the Round 2 offshore wind farm projects planned around the coast of England and Wales to inform the joint DTI/ Ofgem consultation document looking at the high level regulatory options for offshore transmission—"Regulation of Offshore Electricity", which is available in the Libraries of the House.

That study concluded that direct connections to shore for single operators or groups of operators were the cheapest option. We have no policy for the creation of a grid linking those projects with other European countries. That is not to say that in the future as this sector develops it is not an idea that may become attractive.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of energy in each EU country was derived from renewable energy sources in the last period for which figures are available; and what targets each EU country has set for future supplies from such sources. [17187]

Malcolm Wicks: The most up-to-date overview of the percentages of energy generated from renewable sources in EU countries (and beyond) is available from an IEA publication called "Renewables Information 2005". A summary of the policies and future targets for renewables in EU countries (and others) is available in a separate IEA publication; "Renewable Energy: Market and Policy Trends in IEA countries", published in 2004. Both publications are available from the IEA website: www.iea.org.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent assessment he has made of the *(a)* adequacy and *(b)* reliability of the method used to calculate relative costs of energy generation by different means; and if he will amend the basis of the calculation used to reflect risk. [17268]

Malcolm Wicks: Existing methods of calculation attempt to reflect risk and uncertainty. The relative costs of generation from different technologies depends on factors such as discount rates, plant capital and operating costs, fossil fuel prices, carbon prices and decommissioning and waste management costs. The assumptions made for these costs in respect of each technology mean that there is no single number for generation costs for any technology as they are influenced by a range of factors.

Renewables Obligation

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the change in the quantity of carbon dioxide emissions in each of the first two years of operation of the renewables obligation; and what the cost implications are. [16307]

Malcolm Wicks: Providing 10 per cent. of electricity consumption from renewable energy would save about 2.5 million tonnes of carbon per year in 2010 if the equivalent were generated from gas. This equates to a saving of 1.5 per cent. on 1990 emission levels.

In 2002 the total carbon dioxide emissions for the UK were 152.7 million tonnes of which 44.8 million tonnes was from power stations, in 2003, 156.1 million tonnes of carbon dioxide were emitted, of which power stations accounted for 47.6 million tonnes and in 2004 the figure was 158.4 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emitted of which 47 million tonnes came from power stations.

On the cost implications, the "regulatory impact assessment" issued alongside the RO Order predicated that in 2010–11 the percentage impact on average electricity prices compared to 1999 actual levels would be approximately 4.4 per cent. Ofgem estimated, within their Ofgem's "Domestic Competitive Market Review 2004", that the current cost of the RO accounts for 2 per cent. of the domestic debit electricity bill.

Smart Meters

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make an assessment of the effects of the use of smart meters in Italian premises on energy use. [17265]

Malcolm Wicks: ENEL, the Italian monopoly utility embarked on a major programme of electricity smart meter installation in 2002. The system, known as advanced automated meter management integrates metering, billing and contract management. By the end of 2004, ENEL had installed 15 million new meters. It intends to install a further 15 million to complete the programme by the end of 2005. Upon completion of the roll-out, the company will undertake a full assessment of the costs and benefits associated with the programme.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make it his policy to encourage the installation of smart meters in all domestic premises; and what discussions he has held with Ofgem on this matter. [17266]

Malcolm Wicks: Smart metering is potentially one of a number of measures that could be used to influence domestic energy consumption through improved information to the consumer. Potential benefits include reduced energy consumption, accurate billing and help to disadvantaged sections of society.

My officials, working closely with Ofgem and DEFRA are currently undertaking a market framework and cost/benefit analysis that will feed into any future Government policy development in this area.

State Aid

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the status of state aid to British Energy; what liabilities the Government have guaranteed; what representations environmental groups have made to him on the subject in the last 12 months; and what discussions he has had with the European Commission thereon. [16069]

Malcolm Wicks: The European Commission approved Government Restructuring Aid to BE on 22 September 2004. Government's part in deal is principally:

Taking financial responsibility for BE's historic nuclear fuel liabilities managed by BNFL. The cost to Government will average £150–200 million per annum for the next 10 years, falling thereafter; and

Underwriting new and enhanced arrangements by the company in the form of a new Nuclear Liabilities Fund to meet decommissioning and other nuclear liabilities.

BE completed it's restructuring on 14 January 2005.

The Department has received a number of representations from stakeholders on this issue.

Strategic Reserve

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the current level of *(a)* crude oil and *(b)* products in the Strategic Reserve is; and what (i) releases and (ii) acquisitions have been made in each month in 2005. [16969]

Malcolm Wicks: The UK is obliged as a member state of the European Union to hold emergency stocks of oil and as a member of the International Energy Agency to take part in any collective response to a major international supply disruption. The UK meets these international obligations by imposing obligations on commercial companies who hold these stocks as part of their normal operating stocks, rather than by maintaining a Strategic Reserve.

The UK is currently required to hold stock equivalent to 67.5 days' annual consumption. At the end of July 2005, the UK held stock equal to 78 days' supply, or about 13 million tonnes. 55 per cent. of this was held as crude oil, the rest as products.

In the course of September 2005, UK companies, in response to the International Energy Agency's call for a release of stocks to help the international market respond to the disruption caused by Hurricane Katrina, released some 400,000 tonnes onto the market. Of this, about 75 per cent. was products, and about 25 per cent. crude oil. They did this while at the same time both increasing exports of gasoline, and keeping the UK market supplied.

Sustainable Energy (China/India)

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent discussions he has had with the Governments of *(a)* China and *(b)* India on sustainable energy. [17580]

Malcolm Wicks: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State accompanied the my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister at the EU and UK summits with China and India on 5–6 and 7–8 September. Sustainable development was an important part of the outcome.

The EU-China summit established a China-EU partnership on climate change. It will promote sustainable development though co-operation on the development, deployment and transfer of low carbon technology, including advanced near-zero-emissions coal technology through carbon capture and storage. The EU-India summit launched an Initiative on Clean Development and Climate Change, with the aim of promoting cleaner technologies and their use. A Joint Statement on the summit with China and the Political Declaration on the India-EU Strategic Partnership can be found on the EU website at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/china/summit_0905/index.htm

and

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/india/sum09_05/05_pol_decl_070905.pdf

Telecommunications

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what plans Ofcom has to auction telecommunications licences for the 1.78 GHz and 1.88 GHz bands; and if he will make a statement; [17504]

(2) what estimate he has made of the number and size of masts required for DVB-H broadcasts to mobile phones; [17505]

(3) what plans the Government have to allocate radio spectrum for DVB-H broadcasts to mobile phones; [17506]

(4) what radio frequencies are used by *(a)* 2G, *(b)* 2.5G, *(c)* 3G, *(d)* Wifi and *(e)* WiMax communications equipment. [17507]

Alun Michael: The matter raised is the responsibility of the Office of Communications (Ofcom). Ofcom is the independent regulator for the communications sector, deriving its main powers and duties directly from statute rather than by delegation from my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, and accountable to Parliament in its own right. Accordingly, my officials have asked the chief executive of Ofcom to respond directly to the hon. Member and to send me a copy of his response. Copies of the chief executive's letter will also be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

UK Trade and Investment (Nigeria)

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 30 June

2005, *Official Report*, column 1771W, on UK Trade and Investment, if he will place in the Library the off-the-shelf lists of companies that could act as agents in relation to Nigeria provided by UK Trade and Investment to UK companies. [15496]

Ian Pearson: UK Trade and Investment does not hold any off-the-shelf lists of potential Nigerian agents.

UK-Europe Gas Interconnector

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry why the UK-Europe gas Interconnector was unable to import at full capacity during winter 2004–05; and what assessment he has made of the performance of the facility in 2005–06. [17557]

Malcolm Wicks: The flows of gas through the Interconnector are driven by the price differentials between the UK and the continent. The direction of the flows during winter 2004–05 was as expected, given the differentials. National Grid, in their Winter Outlook Report 2005–06, have indicated that they have adopted conservative assumptions that imports through the Interconnector for winter 2005–06 will be an average level of 42mcm/d, with a maximum capacity of 48mcm/d. The report is published on the Ofgem website at www.ofgem.gov.uk/temp/ofgem/cache/cmsattach/12493_214_05.pdf.

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the UK daily natural gas import capacity via pipeline or LNG was during the winter of 2004–05; and what the estimated import capacity for the coming winter of 2005–06 is. [17558]

Malcolm Wicks: Total import capacity for winter 2004–05 was 60mcm/d. For the winter 2005–06 it is estimated at 95mcm/d. Further information, in particular concerning the likely evolution of UKCS gas production levels and our gas import capability, can be found in the Secretary of State's "First Report to Parliament on Security of Gas and Electricity Supply in Great Britain". This was published in July 2005, and is available on the DTI website, at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/publications/policy/sec_supply_first_report.pdf.

Uranium Reserves

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the number of years' global supply of uranium reserves; and if he will make a statement. [17185]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department of Trade and Industry has made no estimate of the global supply of uranium or of the number of years that uranium could be supplied.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Nuclear Energy Agency and the International Atomic Energy Agency has published a report examining uranium production. The report, Uranium 2003: Resources, Production and Demand (2004 edition can be viewed at the OECD Bookshop website under Statistics Publications—http://www.oecdbookshop.org/oecd/index.asp?lang=en)

Websites

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the websites that come under his Department's responsibility; what the cost was of each in the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to each site in that year. [15899]

Alan Johnson: Information about the Department's websites and their cost is not held centrally and to gather it would involve disproportionate cost. The support cost for the main departmental website (www.dti.gov.uk) is included in the overall service charge paid monthly under the IT service contract in place since 1 April 1999. There is no separation of website costs in this charge.

Visitors to the main DTI website have been monitored on a consistent basis since August 2004. In the year September 2004 to August 2005, we recorded six million unique visitors and 33.4 million page impressions.

Wind Farms

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment was made by the Department prior to granting consent to the construction of an offshore wind farm on the Rhyl Flats to the potential impact on *(a)* the visual amenity of residents of the North Wales coast, *(b)* shipping, *(c)* avian wildlife and *(d)* marine wildlife. [16517]

Malcolm Wicks: A comprehensive environmental statement was provided by the project developers to support the consent application for the wind farm at Rhyl Flats and this was available to stakeholders and members of the public for their information and comment.

When taking the decision to grant consent for the project, Ministers considered the results of the public consultation which included responses from the Countryside Council for Wales, the Government's statutory adviser on landscape and nature conservation issues in Wales, the RSPB, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and others, including other Government Departments. None of the organisations mentioned objected to the grant of consent for this wind farm.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent Government studies have been undertaken into low frequency noise and vibration emitted by wind turbines; and if he will make a statement. [17244]

Malcolm Wicks: The following recent studies have been commissioned and examined by the Department :

The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms, published 1996,

Noise emission from wind turbines, published 1999,

Aerodynamic noise reduction for variable speed turbines, published 2000,

Assessment of the Effects of Noise and Vibration from Offshore Wind Farms on Marine Wildlife, published 2001, and

Microseismic and infrasound monitoring of low frequency noise and vibrations from Wind Farms on the Eskdalemuir Seismic Array. (Joint study with MOD and BWEA), published 2005.

One other study 'The measurement and assessment of low frequency noise from three UK wind farms' has been commissioned and should be available this year.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what definition his Department uses of low frequency noise and vibration in relation to wind turbines; and if he will make a statement. [17245]

Malcolm Wicks: Low frequency noise is generally regarded to mean noise in the range of 10 to 200 hertz (HZ). There is no British Standard for measuring low frequency noise and most European countries tend to have their own criterion.

The current accepted assessment methodology for low frequency noise is ETSU-R-97. It is used by planners for guidance and incorporates a robust refinement of the BS4142 (which is a general noise assessment methodology) appropriate to wind farm noise assessment. ETSU-R-97 provides indicative noise levels thought to offer a reasonable degree of protection to wind farm neighbours, without placing unreasonable restrictions on wind farm developers.

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what plans his Department has for *(a)* visits to the area affected by the Teesside off-shore windfarm and *(b)* discussions with people likely to be affected by the proposed windfarm; [15254]

(2) what mechanisms are in place to ensure transparency in the decision-making process for the Teesside off-shore windfarm; and if he will make a statement; [15320]

(3) how local views will be taken into account in the planning process for the Teesside off-shore windfarm; [15321]

(4) what criteria his Department will use to balance the need for renewable energy with *(a)* economic, *(b)* environmental and *(c)* amenity effects of the proposed windfarm in Teesside. [15322]

Malcolm Wicks: In taking a decision on an application for consent under section 36 of the Electricity 1989, Ministers will balance the need to meet the Government's targets for renewable energy generation, and thereby reduce carbon emission, against potential local impacts. It is not possible to specify how impacts will be taken into account in individual cases as the implications of different schemes will vary from one project to another. However, the consents process involves public consultation and all representations will be fully considered in deciding whether to grant consent for the project, to turn down the consent request or hold a public inquiry.

Where relevant, measures to mitigate impacts will also be considered and can be translated into consent conditions. The Department has funded research and produced guidance on the impacts of offshore wind farms and mitigation measures that might be put in place. The determination of a consent application is communicated to the applicant by way of a decision letter. The letter sets out the rationale for the determination and will include assessments of how any objections to the application have been considered. The letter will also be sent to those people and organisations that have made representations during the application process and will be made available more widely on request.

Officials from the Department of Trade and Industry will visit the Redcar area as part of the consideration of the consent application for the Teesside offshore wind farm. Meetings with representatives of local interest groups and other stakeholders will form part of the visit.

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether feedback to Ministers from developers relating to the Teeside off-shore windfarm from *(a)* statutory consultees and *(b)* non-statutory consultees, will be placed in the public domain (i) before and (ii) after the planning decision is taken; and if he will make a statement. [15645]

Malcolm Wicks: There are no plans to put such correspondence in the public domain either before or after the consents decision is taken. However, the decision letter that is sent to the applicant will address all relevant issues including any that arise from such feedback. The decision letter will be made available to other interested parties.

It is also the case that the full environmental statement supporting the application was made available for public comment.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

106 Agreements

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment has been made of *(a)* the average cost of a section 106 agreement to a developer and *(b)* the regulatory cost of section 106 agreements in each of the last five years. [17444]

Yvette Cooper: The cost to developers of section 106 agreements may vary significantly depending on the type and size of development, its location and local planning policies. The most recent assessment of the value of planning obligations across England was undertaken by Sheffield University in 1999. The study indicated that the average contribution through a planning obligation for a development in the North was £148,000 and in the South was £754,000.

Sheffield University and Halcrow Group are currently carrying out research for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister into the value of planning obligations in England. The study is due to report at the end of this year.

No information is held by Government on the overall administrative costs of complying with planning obligations per year. Some information on costs to local authorities is collected as part of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's annual survey of all local planning authorities, but the coverage of responses is too small to be representative.

Affordable Housing

David Taylor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of the affordable housing units to be built or procured through the Housing Corporation Approved

Development Programme in the East Midlands Region in *(a)* 2005–06, *(b)* 2006–07 and *(c)* 2007–08 will be (i) mixed funded social rented housing, (ii) temporary social rented housing, (iii) homebuy general market purchase, (iv) homebuy general new build, (v) mixed funded low cost home ownership for sale, (vi) miscellaneous works to RSL stock, (vii) reimprovements to rented RSL stock, (viii) works only rehabilitation of rented RSL stock, (ix) works only rehabilitation of RSL stock for sale, (x) right to acquire, (xi) voluntary purchase grant, (xii) do-it-yourself shared ownership, (xiii) temporary intermediate and (xiv) market rent housing; and how much will be spent on each category in each year. [18168]

Yvette Cooper: The following tables show the latest estimated completions and expenditure in the East Midlands region for 2005–06 through the Housing Corporation Approved Development Programme, for categories from (i) to (xiv). Funding and completions are not directly comparable, as funding will relate to projects running, not necessarily units completed, in any one year.

Estimated completions in East Midlands region in 2005–06

		Units
i	Mixed Funded Social Rent	1,181
ii	Temporary Social Rent	17
iii	Homebuy Market Purchase	274
iv	Homebuy New Build	0
v	Mixed Funded for Sale	788
vi	Miscellaneous works to RSL stock	0
vii	Reimprovements to RSL rented stock	2
viii	Works only rehabilitation of RSL rented stock	0
ix	Works only rehabilitation of RSL stock for Sale	0
x	Right to Acquire	13
xi	Voluntary Purchase Grant	12
xii	Do-it-yourself-shared Ownership	0
xiii	Temporary intermediate	0
xiv	Market rent housing	0

Estimated expenditure in East Midlands region in 2005–06

		£ million
i	Mixed Funded Social Rent	45.472
ii	Temporary Social Rent	0.147
iii	Homebuy Market Purchase	8.172
iv	Homebuy New Build	0.000
v	Mixed Funded for Sale	12.067
vi	Miscellaneous works to RSL stock	0.000
vii	Reimprovements to RSL rented stock	0.050
viii	Works only rehabilitation of RSL rented stock	0.000
ix	Works only rehabilitation of RSL stock for Sale	0.000
x	Right to Acquire	0.114
xi	Voluntary Purchase Grant	0.110
xii	Do-it-yourself-shared Ownership	0.000
xiii	Temporary intermediate	0.000
xiv	Market rent housing	0.000

Source:
Housing Corporation Information Management System as at 12 October 2005.

For 2006–07 and 2007–08 Regional Housing Boards have made recommendations to Ministers for the allocation of Regional Housing Pots funds. The East Midlands Regional Housing Board has recommended that from their allocation of £284 million for the two years a total of £166 million should be allocated to the provision of affordable housing. However, the exact distribution of funding between programmes for 2006–08 will not be known until the completion of the Housing Corporation's bidding process.

In August 2005 the Housing Corporation launched the bidding round for the 2006–08 Affordable Housing Programme (AHP). This invited both registered social landlords and non-registered bodies to apply for funds to develop affordable housing based on priorities set by the Regional Housing Boards. The outcome of this bidding round will not be known until early in 2006.

Building Regulations

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what reviews he has undertaken of compliance with Part M of the building regulations. [17606]

Yvette Cooper: An early assessment was made in late 2000 of the effect of the 1999 amendment to Part M, which introduced controls for the first time on access to housing. The results were inconclusive as insufficient numbers of dwellings needing to comply with the new requirements had by then been built. A further study commenced in January 2005 and is due to report towards the end of October 2005. No assessment has yet been made of compliance with the requirements for non-domestic buildings introduced on 1 May 2004.

Business Rates

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the net yield from business rates after reliefs in England was in each year since 1997; and what the estimated figure is for 2005–06. [17396]

Mr. Woolas: The figures requested are tabled as follows.

£ million

	Net rate yields			
	Local lists	*Central list*	*CILOR*[1]	*Total*
1997–98	11,617	1,207	469	13,293
1998–99	11,919	1,273	440	13,632
1999–2000	12,383	1,319	332	14,034
2000–01	13,698	868	9	14,575
2001–02	14,778	1,048	12	15,838
2002–03	15,220	1,044	8	16,272
2003–04	15,464	1,029	10	16,503
2004–05[2]	15,853	1,037	10	16,900
2005–06[2]	16,505	1,102	11	17,618

[1] Contribution in lieu of rates for Crown properties. Most Crown properties transferred to local lists with effect from 2000–01.
[2] Estimates.
Source:
NNDR1 and NNDR3 returns; central government information on central and Crown lists.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the 2005 business rates revaluation in England was revenue neutral in 2005–06 on the basis of figures for 2004–05. [17233]

Mr. Woolas: Although figures are not available to identify precisely the effect of business rates revaluation, information provided by billing authorities and relating to the Central List shows that the net rate yield increased by 4.2 per cent. between 2004–05 and 2005–06, from £16,900 million to £17,618 million.

This increase is due mainly to uprating the multiplier by 3.1 per cent. in line with the increase in the Retail Prices Index between September 2003 and September 2004.

The rest of the increase is due to several inter-related factors including: an increase in the multiplier to take account of expected losses from appeals during the lifetime of the 2005 rating list; the increase between years in the number of hereditaments; and the operation of the transitional relief scheme.

Casinos

Mrs. May: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many planning applications to build casinos there have been in the last two years. [18193]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Concessionary Bus Fares

Tim Loughton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which authorities will incur a net cost as a result of the funding formula for the proposed expansion of the concessionary bus fares scheme for older people. [18848]

Mr. Woolas: The Government will provide an extra £350 million for the 2006–07 settlement which will be sufficient to fund the cost to local authorities. No decision has been taken on the funding formula for concessionary fares. This will be announced, alongside other decisions on the settlement formulae, in due course.

Councillors' Remuneration

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what guidance the Government have issued to councils on *(a)* allowances, *(b)* salaries and *(c)* pensions for councillors; and whether they form part of the Local Government Pension Scheme; [17163]

(2) which local authorities in England make pension provision for councillors; [17164]

(3) what estimate he has made of the cost to public funds of pension provision for councillors in each of the last three years. [17269]

Mr. Woolas: Each local authority has discretionary powers to offer membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme to those councillors who have been recommended by the authority's Independent Remuneration Panel. The estimated cost to the taxpayer is a matter for individual authorities and would depend on the take-up of membership it had endorsed. Consequently, no information is held centrally on costs or membership of the scheme.

The guidance which currently applies to allowances and salaries was issued by the Government in 2003, as 'Guidance on Regulation for Local Authority Allowances'. The guidance accompanies the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. The Government have issued no guidance on pensions for councillors.

Departmental Websites

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much his Department has spent on its website in each year since 2001; and what estimate he has made of the number of visits to the site. [15574]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has spent £842,401 on the current ODPM website. Detailed records on website visits have only been kept since 2003 when the latest website was launched:

ODPM website

Month	*Unique visitors*	*Page views*
September 2003	76,000	3,136,242
October 2003	94,466	3,167,256
November 2003	102,246	3,009,555
December 2003	69,776	1,572,540
January 2004	110,407	4,009,125
February 2004	112,003	4,019,681
March 2004	132,951	4,302,087
April 2004	101,918	1,797,611
May 2004	113,600	2,469,731
June 2004	104,979	2,271,207
July 2004	105,564	2,212,976
August 2004	109,680	2,022,252
September 2004	121,136	1,867,216
October 2004	139,141	1,927,086
November 2004	153,532	2,215,063
December 2004	126,887	1,659,082
January 2005	185,029	2,371,480
February 2005	170,179	2,219,655
March 2005	188,419	2,572,270
April 2005	200,261	2,679,648
May 2005	199,871	2,690,541
June 2005	176,246	2,605,862
July 2005	169,169	2,523,646
August 2005	167,779	2,489,988

Design for Manufacture Competition

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether value-added tax will be levied on properties built for the design for manufacture competition. [17377]

Yvette Cooper: All homes to be built within the design for manufacture competition are new build, and are therefore zero-rated for the purposes of value-added tax.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what profit margins his Department has calculated for homes constructed in the design for manufacture competition. [17379]

Yvette Cooper: The design for manufacture competition is being run by English Partnerships on behalf of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. English Partnerships is currently evaluating bids from developers for stage three of the design for manufacture competition. Final development proposals and planning applications for each site will determine the mix of housing types, sale prices and community facilities.

English Partnerships has asked developers to include a profit margin within the £60,000 construction cost for the dwellings. As part of the bid evaluation process English Partnerships is considering the reasonableness of such construction profit margins in relationship to the project risk. English Partnerships has set clawback terms linked to final sales prices over base values to be agreed with each developer in negotiation, so the agency will benefit if the land generates values higher than anticipated.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate his Department has made of the average sale price of a house constructed in the design for manufacture competition. [17380]

Yvette Cooper: The design for manufacture competition is being run by English Partnerships on behalf of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. English Partnerships is currently evaluating bids from developers for stage three of the design for manufacture competition. Final development proposals and planning applications will determine the mix of housing types, sale prices and community facilities for each site.

English Partnerships carried out base valuations of the sites before the start of the competition, which included an estimate of projected sales prices for the mix of homes on each site. The final sales prices will be determined by the developers according to local market circumstances. The nine competition sites are as far apart as Leeds and Hastings. Average sales prices will therefore vary between sites according to local market conditions.

Empty Homes

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* second homes and *(b)* empty homes there were in each local authority area in England in the latest year for which figures are available. [17257]

Yvette Cooper: A table containing the number of *(a)* second homes and *(b)* empty homes in each billing authority area in England as at November 2004, the latest year for which figures are available, has been placed in the Library of the House. The data are as reported on CTB1 and CTB1S forms submitted by local authorities to ODPM each year. (Variations in reporting and misclassification may affect the accuracy of these figures for some areas). The figures for empty homes include both long and short-term empty properties.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister for what maximum duration a local authority may possess a property under an empty dwelling management order; and what restrictions exist on *(a)* renewing and *(b)* extending orders. [17391]

Yvette Cooper: The maximum duration for an interim Empty Dwelling Management Order is 12 months but it may be made for a shorter period, or revoked before the end of the period specified in the Order. An interim Empty Dwelling Management Order cannot be renewed. On cessation of the order, the local housing authority must either take no further action or make a final Empty Dwelling Management Order. An interim Order can only be made with the authority of a residential property tribunal. Before deciding to apply for such an Order the authority is required to make reasonable efforts to notify the relevant proprietor of the dwelling that it is considering making an order and to ascertain what steps are being taken or are intended to be taken to secure that the dwelling is occupied. It must take account of the rights of the relevant proprietor and the interests of the wider community.

The maximum duration for a final Empty Dwelling Management Order is seven years, but again it may be made for a shorter period or revoked before the end of the period specified in the Order. A local housing authority may make a new final Empty Dwelling Management Order to replace one that has expired if it considers that otherwise the dwelling would become or remain unoccupied. Where the dwelling in question is unoccupied, the authority may only make a new final Empty Dwelling Management Order if it has taken all such steps as it was appropriate to take under the existing order with a view to securing occupation of the dwelling. It must, again, take into account the interests of the community and the effect the order will have on the rights of the relevant proprietor or on third parties. It must also consider whether compensation should be paid by them to any third party in respect of any interference in consequence of the order with the rights of the third party.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether local authorities are required to charge a market rent on properties obtained under an empty dwelling management order and then rented out to a third party. [17393]

Yvette Cooper: Local authorities will not be required to charge a market rent on properties subject to Empty Dwelling Management Orders. A final Empty Dwelling Management Order must contain a management scheme containing details of income and expenditure. This must include, amongst other things, the amount of rent or other payments the local authority considers the dwelling might reasonably fetch on the open market and the amount of rent or other payments the local authority will seek to obtain. The scheme must also state the authority's intentions as regards the use of the rent or other payments to meet relevant expenditure. The authority may in certain circumstances recover from the relevant proprietor the difference between the amount it has received in rent and other payments and the amount it has paid out in relevant expenditure.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much an owner of a property will receive from a local authority for their property that has been rented out to a third party under an empty dwelling management order. [17394]

Yvette Cooper: Any rent or other payment which the authority collects or recovers from persons occupying or having the right to occupy may be used to meet expenditure reasonably incurred and any compensation payable to a third party under the order. The authority is obliged to pay the relevant proprietor any amount of rents or other payments that remain after deduction of such expenditure. It is obliged to keep full accounts of its income and expenditure in respect of the dwelling and allow access by anyone with an estate or interest in the dwelling access to those accounts.

Fire Services

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the new south-east regional fire control room in Fareham is expected to be operative; whether the new site is fully resilient; what its estimated cost is; what other locations were considered; what assessment was made of *(a)* local labour market conditions and *(b)* the cost and availability of suitable premises in each case; by whom, and on whose recommendation, the decision to situate the regional fire control room in

Fareham was made; which fire authorities have expressed support for the decision; and whether a new building will be required. [17894]

Jim Fitzpatrick: On current plans the south-east control centre will be operational in 2008–09. The new centre will form part of a fully resilient national network. The site will be secure. The selection of the site was the result of a procurement process carried out under EU procurement regulations and the availability of suitable labour formed part of the criteria. An assessment was made before going out to tender as to whether there would be a choice of suitable sites, and sites with existing premises were not ruled out of consideration. The decision on the Fareham site was taken by a qualified panel of specialists, and the chair of the SE Regional Management Board was fully briefed on the entire process. Support of particular Fire and Rescue Authorities in the region was not a selection criterion. A new building will be required and an artist's impression of it is on the website: http://www.firecontrol.odpm.gov.uk/

The up front cost of the development will be borne by the private developer and is commercially confidential. The building will be leased and over a 25 year period the net present value of the contract is £22,148,695.

Sites were submitted in the following areas in response to an OJEU notice posted on 16 April 2004. Note that for some locations more than one site was put forward:

Ashford, Aldermaston, Aylesford, Bracknell, Chessington, Cosham, Crawley, Crowthorne, Dartford, Eastbourne, Fareham, Folkstone, Harwell, Havant, Hook, Kingsworthy, Lindford Wood, Milton Keynes, Reading, Sittingbourne, Slough, Tingewick, West Drayton, and West Mailing.

Government Offices

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the size and structure of the Government office regions are dependent on EU approval under the Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics classification regulations. [17385]

Yvette Cooper: No. The size and structure of the English regions are an administrative matter for UK Ministers. The current regions have existed for various planning and statistical purposes since the second world war, with some minor changes over time. The Government offices for the regions, the regional development agencies and other parts of Government operate to these boundaries.

For practical reasons of data availability and the implementation of regional policies, the NUTS nomenclature is based primarily on the institutional divisions currently in force in the member states.

Home Ownership

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate the Government has made of the number of people in England who have three or more homes. [17220]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Homelessness

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what changes have been made to the presentation of homelessness statistics in his departmental press releases and statistical bulletins in the last six months. [17354]

Yvette Cooper: Summary information about local authorities' activities under the homelessness legislation in England is published in quarterly National Statistics Releases, on pre-announced publication dates.

In the "Sustainable Communities—Homes for All" strategy published in January this year there was a commitment that "... we will be reviewing the way we collect homelessness statistics, to improve our understanding of who is homeless and the circumstances in which they are living." This included improving the presentation of the information on statutory homelessness, and the layout of the quarterly release was revised using charts and maps to more clearly present the information, and to incorporate additional information (such as length of time spent in temporary accommodation) which had been collected but not previously published.

The revised format was then issued for public consultation in April, inviting comments on the new layout.

The Statistical Release published on 13 June, covering statistics for the first quarter of 2005, was the first to be produced using the new format. Copies of these and previous releases are available on the ODPM website and also in the Library of the House.

Richard Burden: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations he has received about the practices adopted by Birmingham city council in relation to its responsibilities to the homeless; and what action he is taking on the matter. [18303]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has received representations from hon. Members for Birmingham, Northfield and Birmingham, Selly Oak, about Birmingham city council's practice when receiving homeless applications for housing assistance from private sector tenants whose tenancy is coming to an end.

Officials in ODPM provide ongoing advice and support to all local housing authorities, including Birmingham city council, in their work to prevent homelessness. The practice that we encourage all of them to follow is to tackle homelessness at the earliest opportunity, by enabling people to continue to live in their current accommodation where possible or helping them to obtain suitable alternative accommodation. It is not good practice to simply advise people to remain in their accommodation until their landlord obtains a court order for possession and the bailiffs arrive, and we advise against that.

Following initial enquiries, Birmingham city council has informed officials that it is adopting the good practice we advocate in these circumstances. However, officials from ODPM'S homelessness and housing support directorate are due to meet senior officers from Birmingham city council shortly to discuss the policies being pursued by the housing authority and provide further guidance if needed.

Household Projections

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to publish the household projections for the next 10 years; and if he will make a statement. [16501]

Yvette Cooper: A release date for the 2003 based Household Projections for England will be pre-announced on the National Statistics website as soon as the work is complete.

Housing

Mr. Laws: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people were on the housing register in each English local authority for each year from 1996–97 to 2005–06; and if he will make a statement. [18623]

Yvette Cooper: Local authorities in England report the numbers of households on their housing waiting list as at 1 April in their annual Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix returns. Local authorities sometimes maintain a common waiting list with the housing association(s) in their district. However, information is not held centrally where a housing association maintains a separate waiting list to the local authority.

The annual data from this source for the years 1996 through to 2005 have been placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what process was followed to assess the impact of the withdrawal of the supported housing management grant to residential care homes for vulnerable people with disabilities in *(a)* Sutton Coldfield and *(b)* the West Midlands over the last five years. [17121]

Yvette Cooper: Authorities and providers were informed in 2001 that the sheltered housing management grant (SHMG) in residential care homes would be ineligible for long term SP funding and alternative funding should be sought before 1 April 2006. It was a matter for local authorities to assess the impact on the local area and ensure that appropriate funding was in place.

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what alternative funding provision has been made available to those in receipt of the supported housing management grant in *(a)* Sutton Coldfield and *(b)* the West Midlands. [17122]

Yvette Cooper: No alternative central funding provision has been made available to those in receipt of supported housing management grant (SHMG) as SHMG was transferred in to the Supporting People fund with effect from 1 April 2003.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many of the members of his housing task force have left to work in the private sector since its creation; and what restrictions are placed on their leaving to join *(a)* housing associations and *(b)* financial institutions financing council housing privatisation. [17857]

Yvette Cooper: Since its creation, three people have left the community housing taskforce to work in the private sector. There are no restrictions placed on their leaving.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will extend the work of his housing task force to include advising local authorities who decide to retain their housing stock. [17858]

Yvette Cooper: The Community Housing Task Force already performs this function.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his housing task force provides advice to local authorities who retain their own housing stock. [17859]

Yvette Cooper: Yes.

Interreg Project

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on his Department's role in the future of the Interreg Project. [17392]

Yvette Cooper: The European Commission has proposed that, during the period of the next EU Financial perspective (2007–13), the current Interreg programme should be replaced by a new European Territorial Co-operation Objective designed to support financially cross border and trans-national projects on matters relating to economic, social and environmental activities. The UK supports the principle of such an objective. This proposal, along with other matters covered in proposed new Structural Fund Regulations, is under discussion in the European Council. It is the UK's intention to make as much progress as possible with these discussions during its Presidency. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is working closely with other interested Departments and the Devolved Administrations in supporting the UK's position in these discussions.

Local Authority Housing

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many local authorities have entered into private finance initiative contracts for the maintenance of their stock of council houses. [18048]

Yvette Cooper: Five local authorities (Manchester, Reading, Leeds and the London boroughs of Islington and Newham) have entered into private finance initiative contracts to refurbish, maintain and also manage some of their stock of council dwellings to the Decent Homes Standard and beyond over a 30 year period.

Local Authority Legal Advisers

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidelines are issued by his Department to local authorities concerning the obligations of local authority legal advisers. [18324]

Mr. Woolas: Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and article 23 of the Local Authorities (Executive and Alternative Arrangements) (Modification of Enactments and Other Provisions) (England) Order 2001 require each local authority to appoint a monitoring officer to provide legal advice to their authority. This legislation sets out the obligations placed upon that officer.

Local Public Service Boards

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the Government's plans to introduce local public service boards. [17358]

Mr. Woolas: Our policy is to encourage local authorities and local strategic partnerships to decide upon their own arrangements for working together to improve the well-being of their areas through community strategies and local area agreements. We do not promote any single model.

Lyons Inquiry

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) whether the amended remit of the Lyons Inquiry *(a)* includes and *(b)* prohibits consideration of (i) the structure and tiers of local government and (ii) the number of councillors; [17158]

(2) whether the extended remit of the Lyons Inquiry includes the review of the two-tier structure of local government in England. [17304]

Mr. Woolas: The extended remit of Sir Michael's independent inquiry into local government funding, and the current and emerging role of local government, was announced on 20 September. A copy of that announcement, which incorporates the extended terms of reference for Sir Michael's inquiry, has been placed in the House Library. The terms do not include consideration of the structures of local government.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations his Department's working group on Local Government Financial Statistics has made to the Lyons Inquiry. [17227]

Mr. Woolas: The Working Group on Local Government Financial Statistics (WGLGFS) has not made any representations to the Lyons Inquiry.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects the Lyons Inquiry into local government finance to publish its interim report. [17360]

Mr. Woolas: Sir Michael Lyons will produce his final report at the end of 2006. Meanwhile in autumn 2005, to set the scene for the next phase of his inquiry, he will set out his preliminary thinking and publish research and analysis undertaken so far, drawing out the relationship of local government function to finance.

Parking

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what changes the Government have made to planning guidance and regulations on the *(a)* provision of parking spaces and *(b)* level of parking charges since 1997. [17258]

Yvette Cooper: Planning guidance on residential parking spaces is contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: "Housing" (PPG3), published in March 2000. PPG3 advises local authorities that car parking standards that result, on average, in development with more than 1.5 off-street car parking spaces per dwelling are unlikely to reflect the Government's emphasis on securing sustainable residential environments. This does not mean we expect all dwellings in all developments to have 1.5 parking spaces. But we do expect local authorities to anticipate the pattern of parking needs in their area and draw up policies for car parking provision that will deliver the approach set out in PPG3.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: "Transport" (PPG 13) was published in March 2001. PPG13 notes that reducing the amount of parking in new development (and in the expansion and change of use in existing development) is essential, as part of a package of planning and transport measures, to promote sustainable travel choices. Annex D of PPG13 sets out national maximum parking standards for a range of major developments. Local authorities may adopt more rigorous standards subject to the advice in PPG13.

The Government does not regulate the level of parking charges. The Secretary of State for Transport does, however, give guidance to local authorities outside London with Decriminalised Parking Enforcement powers on the setting of parking charges. This guidance is set out in paragraphs 4.9–4.14 of Local Authority Circular 1/95—"Guidance on Decriminalised Parking Enforcement outside London".

Inside London, it is the Mayor who issues guidance to local authorities on parking matters.

Pathfinder Areas

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the estimated total public expenditure is in each of the Pathfinder areas for each year of the programme. [17254]

Yvette Cooper: Information on total public expenditure in Pathfinder areas is not available. Total payments to the housing market renewal pathfinders, including housing market renewal funding, separate early action funding from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and payments from the capital modernisation fund are shown in the table:

£ million

Pathfinder	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Birmingham Sandwell	6.6	13.4
East Lancashire	6. 6	22.8
Hull and East Riding	0	2.6
Manchester Salford	20	44
Merseyside	6.6	34.3
Newcastle Gateshead	9.6	28
North Staffordshire	6.6	7
Oldham Rochdale	6.6	17.1
South Yorkshire	6.6	27.4
Total	69.2	196.6

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what is the estimated cost of purchasing a property in the Pathfinder areas in order to demolish it. [17255]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many homes are planned to be demolished in each of the Pathfinder project areas for each year of the programme. [17256]

Yvette Cooper: Funding and planned outputs have been agreed with Pathfinders for the period up to March 2006. In total, the programme is planned to deliver 21,000 refurbished homes, 3,000 new homes and 10,000 demolitions by that date.

Actual demolitions for 2004–05 and expected figures for 2005–06 are:

	Demolitions funded by housing market renewal grant	
Pathfinder	*Actual 2004–05*	*Estimate 2005–06*
Birmingham Sandwell	71	619
East Lancashire	397	393
Hull and East Riding	0	44
Manchester Salford	677	1,023
Merseyside	122	2,578
Newcastle Gateshead	409	1,591
North Staffordshire	234	n/a
Oldham Rochdale	78	222
South Yorkshire	1,097	503

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will be agreeing funding and outputs for the next two financial years towards the end of this year and early next year.

Planning Permission

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) if he will make provision for the public to appeal in a planning permission application case where the matter is of considerable public interest; [18290]

(2) whether there are conditions under which members of the public may appeal a planning permission decision. [18291]

Yvette Cooper: Third parties do not have a right of appeal in the way that applicants do because it is the responsibility of local planning authorities to act in the general public interest when determining planning applications. Local authorities must determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan for the area unless material considerations indicate otherwise. They must take account of the views of local people on planning matters before taking decisions and elected members must justify their decisions subsequently to their electorate. Any right of appeal for third parties would slow down the system. Furthermore, it would not be consistent with our democratically accountable system of planning.

PPG3/PPS3

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects a *(a)* draft and *(b)* final version of the new PPG3/PPS3 to be published. [17221]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister intends to publish for consultation a draft of new Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) before the end of the year, with the aim of publishing a final version of PPS3 as soon as practicable after the consultation period has closed.

Public Services (Inspection)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how Cabinet Office plans for league tables of public services will relate to local government and existing inspection regimes; and if he will make a statement. [17641]

Mr. Woolas: The Cabinet Office has no plans for league tables of public services. A plan has been developed for a Customer Satisfaction Index, which was announced in a speech by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster to the Social Market Foundation on 24 August this year, but this does not involve producing league tables of organisations. This index will provide information on specific encounters with services, which may be delivered by single or multiple organisations. No conflict is envisaged with other existing sector based schemes.

Regional Assemblies

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the decision-making powers of regional assemblies. [17972]

Yvette Cooper: Regional assemblies have no statutory powers but are designated under section 8(1) of the RDA Act to contribute to the regional economic strategies produced by the regional development agencies and scrutinise their delivery.

In their capacity as regional planning bodies they have a statutory duty to oversee the Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) including its monitoring and implementation and preparing draft revisions where necessary.

Regional Chambers

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether England's regional chambers are defined in *(a)* law and *(b)* Government policy as part of local government in England. [17145]

Yvette Cooper: The regional assemblies are voluntary bodies comprising local authorities and regional economic and social partners. They are not a part of local government.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance the Government have produced on the legality of local authorities making payments to England's regional chambers; and if he will make a statement. [17149]

Yvette Cooper: The Government do not produce guidance relating specifically to local authority payments to regional assemblies.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the level of central government funding to each regional chamber in each year since their creation was; and what the estimated figures for *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* 2006–07 are. [17159]

Yvette Cooper: Past and current grants made by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) are as follows.

£

	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
North East	500,000	600,000	1,408,000	1,708,000	1,708,000
North West	500,000	600,000	1,837,000	2,536,000	2,536,000
Yorkshire and the Humber	500,000	600,000	1,655,000	1,923,000	1,923,000
West Midlands	500,000	600,000	1,671,000	2,071,000	2,071,000
East Midlands	500,000	600,000	1,631,000	2,056,000	2,056,000
East	500,000	600,000	1,874,000	2,112,000	2,112,000
South East	500,000	600,000	2,186,000	3,280,000	3,280,000
South West	500,000	600,000	1,613,000	2,101,000	2,101,000
English Regions Network	100,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Total	4,100,000	5,000,000	14,075,000	17,987,000	17,987,000

The grant supports the assemblies in the performance of their designated functions to scrutinise the work of the Regional Development Agencies; fulfil their regional planning responsibilities; and for the development of their strategic regional role.

The increase in funding from 2003–04 was granted in recognition of the statutory responsibilities that were placed on them as regional planning bodies by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The overall ODPM grant available to regional assemblies is set to increase to £19 million in 2006–07 but as yet no decision has been made on how it will be allocated.

Regional Emphasis Documents

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the Government's plans to commission regional emphasis documents from the Government officer of the regions, regional development agencies and regional assemblies; and what the timetable is for their publication. [17497]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

The Government invited the regions to submit an input into the 2004 Spending Review in the form of regional emphasis documents. The Government's plans for the Comprehensive Spending Review were set out in a statement to the House on 19 July 2005. Further details will be published in due course.

Small Business Rate Relief

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the interim take-up of small business rate relief was in each council in England. [17232]

Mr. Woolas: This information is not available centrally. On the basis of returns completed by local authorities before the start of the current financial year, an estimated £390 million is expected to be claimed in small business rate relief for 2005–06 (the first year in which the scheme has been operating). Applications for small business rate relief may be made up to six months after the end of the financial year to which the application relates, or six months from notification of an alteration to a rateable value that makes the hereditament eligible for relief.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether small business rate relief is available in relation to the levy charged by business improvement districts. [17390]

Mr. Woolas: No. Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are business-led initiatives to deliver improvements in a defined business area. It is the businesses themselves who decide on the amount of and the arrangements for paying the levy and who vote in a ballot on whether or not a proposed scheme should go ahead. However, many BID proposals exclude smaller properties from the BID levy or offer special terms for small properties.

Social Housing

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the impact on smaller registered social landlords of requiring all lead regulated associations to produce an annual efficiency statement. [17640]

Yvette Cooper: The Housing Corporation does not require smaller RSLs with fewer than 250 housing units to produce an annual efficiency statement. Consistent with its policy of minimising regulatory burdens, the Corporation is not prescribing the form of the efficiency statement and is basing it on self-assessment. Well-managed organisations should already be collecting the information required to make this return.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to respond to the Audit Commission's report on Financing Council Housing; and what changes to the present system would be necessary to implement the recommendations. [18386]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is considering carefully the points raised in the Audit Commission report.

Telecommunication Masts

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what planning controls apply to *(a)* Network Rail telecommunication masts and *(b)* standard mobile phone masts. [17398]

Yvette Cooper: Class A of Part 17 of the GPDO, permits development by a railway undertaker on its operational land required in connection with the movement of traffic by rail, this permission includes telecommunication masts but only for the communications system for railways (GSM-R).

Mobile phone masts are subject to the normal planning regulations in place throughout England, unless exempted by the regulations set out in Part 24 of

the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (GPDO) as amended by SI 2115/2003).

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many mobile phone masts were registered for business rates in England in each year since 1997. [17401]

Mr. Woolas: The number of non-domestic hereditaments shown in the Rating List, for England, under the description of Communication Stations, are as provided in the table. The Valuation Office Agency does not hold statistics, of this nature, earlier than 1998.

Statistics as at:	*Number*
1 April 1998	3,549
1 April 1999	8,322
31 July 2000	11,560
31 March 2001	12,265
31 March 2002	12,709
31 March 2003	17,233
31 March 2004	19,354
31 March 2005	20,930

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations he has received about the proliferation of telecommunication mast applications in residential areas; and if he will make a statement. [17839]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister receives many representations on matters relating to the telecommunications industry. The information about such representations is not readily available in the breakdown requested and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Thames Gateway

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment the Government have made of flood risks to Thames Gateway developments arising from the Communities Plan. [17225]

Yvette Cooper: Growth in the Thames Gateway will be largely concentrated on previously developed land in existing urban areas which is already protected by a very high standard of existing defence. Development will be in line with Planning Policy Guidance Note 25, which applies a sequential risk-based approach to prevent inappropriate development in flood risk areas. In order to enable local planning authorities to apply planning policy effectively, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is funding Strategic Flood Risk Assessments across the Thames Gateway to assess flood risk and inform planning decisions.

WiMax Transmitters

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what planning controls apply to WiMax transmitters. [17399]

Yvette Cooper: WiMAX transmitters are subject to the normal planning regulations in place throughout England, unless exempted by the regulations set out in Part 24 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (GPDO) as amended by SI 2115/2003).

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 18 October 2005

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

Retreaded Tyres

Bill Wiggin: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners how many vehicles for which the Commissioners are responsible are fitted with retreaded tyres. [18583]

Sir Stuart Bell: None. Both companies with which the Church Commissioners have contract hire arrangements provide new cars with new tyres. They also confirm that all tyre replacements are with new tyres.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Legal Deposit Libraries

Mr. Heald: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission what guidance the Electoral Commission has produced on the effect of the Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003 on political parties and their constituent organisations; and if he will make a statement. [17403]

Peter Viggers: The Commission has advised me that it has produced no such guidance.

SCOTLAND

Road Congestion

8. **Mr. Hollobone:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what assessment he has made of the impact on the Scottish economy of congestion on the M1 and A1. [17069]

Mr. Darling: Reductions in travel time, and improvements in reliability provided by the Highways Agency schemes on the A1/M1, are generally assessed to have a significantly beneficial impact on the whole economy.

Energy Prices

9. **Anne Moffat:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what assessment he has made of the effects of energy prices on the Scottish economy and consumers. [17070]

David Cairns: Oil prices have risen well above expectations but the economic effect on Scotland and the rest of the UK has so far been limited and will be less severe than in previous episodes of high prices.

Scottish Road Haulage Association

10. **Jim Sheridan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when he last met representatives of the Scottish Road Haulage Association to discuss matters of mutual interest; and what issues were discussed. [17071]

Mr. Darling: I met representatives of the Scotland and Northern Ireland branch of the Road Haulage Association in Edinburgh on 22 September. We discussed a wide range of issues.

Electricity Costs

11. **Stewart Hosie:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Treasury regarding the impact on businesses in Scotland of the cost of electricity. [17072]

David Cairns: I have regular discussions with Treasury Ministers on a wide range of matters.

Olympics

12. **Mr. Joyce:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport regarding the potential benefits of the 2012 Olympics for Scotland. [17073]

David Cairns: My right hon. Friend has regular discussions with the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on a range of issues, including the potential benefits for Scotland from the London 2012 Olympics.

Dangerous Knives

13. **Mr. McGovern:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Scottish First Minister regarding legislation to ban dangerous knives. [17074]

David Cairns: My right hon. Friend and I have discussions with Scottish Executive Ministers on a wide range of issues.

Legislation on control of knives is a devolved matter. The Police, Public Order and Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill, which was published by the Scottish Executive on 3 October, includes provisions to double the maximum penalty for carrying a knife in public from two to four years; will give the police the unconditional power to arrest someone suspected of carrying a knife; and will increase the minimum age for buying a non-domestic knife from 16 to 18.

Commonwealth Games 2014

14. **Ann McKechin:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement regarding the Commonwealth Games 2014 bid by Glasgow City Council. [17075]

David Cairns: Glasgow City Council should be congratulated on its bold decision to bid for the Commonwealth Games in 2014. A successful Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, supported by Scottish Ministers, will be a success for Scotland, delivering social and economic benefits to the city and the nation.

Drug Abuse

Mr. MacDougall: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when he last met the First Minister of Scotland to discuss drug abuse in Scotland; and if he will make a statement. [17076]

David Cairns: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave earlier today to my right hon. Friend the Member for Coatbridge, Chryston and Bellshill (Mr. Clarke).

WALES

Council Tax Revaluation

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many homes moved up one or more bands in the recent council tax revaluation process in Wales. [17278]

Nick Ainger: Figures provided by the Valuation Office Agency show that 33 per cent. of domestic properties in Wales moved up one or more bands following revaluation.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what the estimated cost is of the council tax revaluation in Wales to *(a)* the Valuation Office Agency and *(b)* central Government. [17388]

Nick Ainger: The costs of revaluation and rebanding were met from the National Assembly budget. Revaluation was undertaken by the Valuation Office Agency.

The costs to date are estimated as follows:

	£ million
2002–03	1.510
2003–04	1.790
2004–05	1.970
Total	5.270

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what estimate the Valuation Office Agency has made of the number of households in Wales which moved up *(a)* four council tax bands, *(b)* five council tax bands and *(c)* six council tax bands, before the application of transitional relief, in the Welsh council tax revaluation. [17389]

Nick Ainger: At a revaluation, bands are reviewed according to the physical characteristics of the dwelling when the list comes into effect. However, no account is taken of subsequent improvements until either the ownership of the dwelling changes, or there is a further revaluation.

It follows that some of the increases in banding will be as a result of physical changes made between 1993 and 2005.

The figures requested are as follows:

1,185 households moved up four bands

339 households moved up five bands

85 households moved up six bands.

Welsh Language

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will support giving the Welsh language treaty status in the European Union. [17913]

Nick Ainger *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* The Government are committed to the principle that, in the conduct of public business and the administration of justice in Wales, the Welsh and English languages should be treated on a basis of equality.

The European Union Constitutional Treaty was translated and is available on the website of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. We will consider translating future European Treaties into Welsh on a case-by-case basis.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Animal Trading

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many traders have been convicted in the UK for illegally trading in *(a)* wild animals and *(b)* products made from animals on the internet in each year since 2000; and if she will make a statement. [17260]

Jim Knight: We are not aware of any convictions for illegal trading of such items on the internet. However, in 2004 a man was given an official police caution for the illegal sale of a sperm whale tooth via an internet auction site. The tooth was confiscated.

In 2005 a man received an absolute discharge for illegally advertising a stuffed snowy owl on an internet auction site.

Carbon

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the loss of carbon from soils since 1980; what she estimates the loss from this source will be in 2005; and if she will make a statement. [17200]

Mr. Morley: Based on soil carbon measurements carried out in England and Wales between 1978 and 2002, we estimate that on average 4.4 million tonnes of carbon has been lost from the top 15 cm of soil each year. The rate of loss in 2005 is likely to be at about the same level. The actual amounts will vary between soil types and land management practices, and recent evidence suggests that carbon is increasing in some soils. The cause of this loss, and whether carbon has been lost to the atmosphere or dissolved in water and incorporated in other sediments, or transported to lower depths, is not yet fully understood and Defra has therefore commissioned further research.

We have introduced a number of soil protection measures that will help to conserve soil carbon. The reformed Common Agriculture Policy requires all farmers in receipt of the single payment to take measures to protect their soil from erosion, organic matter decline and structural damage. Further incentives for good soil/

land management are available under the Environmental Stewardship scheme. We are also planning further soil monitoring to estimate soil carbon levels.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much carbon was produced per person in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* each EU country in (i) 2003 and (ii) 2004. [17350]

Mr. Morley: The information requested is shown in the following table. Data for EU countries for 2004 are not yet available.

Carbon dioxide emissions per person for EU countries

	Tonnes of carbon per person	
(a) United Kingdom	*2003*	*2004*[1]
Including LUCF[2]	2.63	2.65
Excluding LUCF	2.56	
(b) EU (excluding LUCF)	*2003*	*2004*
Austria	2.6	
Belgium	3.3	
Cyprus	2.7	
Czech Republic	3.4	
Denmark	3.0	
Estonia	3.8	
Finland	3.8	
France	1.9	
Germany	2.9	
Greece	2.7	
Hungary	1.6	
Ireland	3.1	
Italy	2.3	
Latvia	0.9	
Lithuania	1.0	
Luxembourg	6.5	
Malta[3]	1.7	
Netherlands	3.0	
Poland[3]	2.3	
Portugal	1.7	
Slovakia	2.2	
Slovenia	2.2	
Spain	2.2	
Sweden	1.7	
UK	2.6	
Average for EU25	2.4	

[1] Provisional estimate will be subject to revision when final estimates are published in 2006.

[2] Including the effects of land use change and forestry (LUCF) resulting in either a small uptake or loss of carbon dioxide from soil and atmosphere.

[3] Values derived by the European Environment Agency from a gap-filling exercise.

Notes:

1. EU Emission data taken from Annual European Community greenhouse gas inventory 1990–2003 and inventory report 2005 (EEA, 2005).
2. Provisional 2004 UK data taken from e-Digest of Environmental Statistics http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/statistics/index.htm
3. Population data taken from Eurostat Yearbook 2005.

Carbon Emissions

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of carbon emissions from *(a)* domestic and *(b)* international shipping (i) by volume and (ii) as a percentage of total carbon emissions in the last year for which figures are available; and what strategy is in place to reduce such emissions. [17199]

Mr. Morley: The table shows carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions from UK domestic and UK international shipping in million tonnes of carbon (MtC) for 2003. The table also shows UK domestic shipping emissions as a percentage of the total 2003 UK CO_2 emission of 156.1 MtC.

Shipping	*CO_2 emissions (MtC)*	*Percentage of total UK CO_2 emissions*
Domestic	0.9	0.6
International	1.4	—

Under the internationally agreed methodology, greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping are excluded from the national greenhouse gas inventory. They are reported separately as a memo item and, if included, would represent less than one per cent. of the UK total CO_2 emissions.

The international figure is derived from marine fuel (or bunker fuel) sales, and sales represents emissions from fuel burned by seagoing ships of all flags that are engaged in international transport.

The domestic figure is also derived from bunker sales and represents emissions from fuel used for navigation of all vessels not engaged in international transport.

The UK's approach to the regulation of shipping is to apply international standards to ships flying its flag and to ships entering its ports or operating in UK waters. Work on reducing maritime emissions goes through the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). At the last Maritime Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) meeting in July 2005, the United Kingdom contributed significantly to difficult negotiations on the adoption of Interim Guidelines for Voluntary Ship CO_2 Emission Indexing for Use in Trials (as well as Guidelines for On-board Exhaust Gas SOx Cleaning Systems).

Ships under the United Kingdom flag are being encouraged to participate in these trials, which will help identify a ship's greenhouse gas index where the information obtained may be used in the context of reducing CO_2 emissions.

Civil Servants (Vegetarianism)

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her policy is on employing vegetarian officials at a senior level in *(a)* the Upland Land Management Farm Advisory Group and *(b)* other meat producing policy areas of her Department. [17934]

Jim Knight: Dietary preference is not a selection criterion for any posts in Defra. It would not be sensible employment practice to use it as a criterion.

Community Programmes

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many community heating schemes the Community Energy Programme has funded in Oxfordshire. [17587]

Mr. Morley: The Community Energy programme has not funded any community heating schemes in Oxfordshire.

Correspondence

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many letters to her Department from hon. Members in session *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06 remain unanswered, broken down by those which are (i) one month old, (ii) two months old, (iii) three months old, (iv) four months old and (v) over six months old. [13862]

Jim Knight: We have no hon. Members letters outstanding that were received by the Department in 2004 or earlier.

As at 10 October 2005, there are currently 396 unanswered hon. Members letters in the Department broken down as follows:

(i) one month old = 283

(ii) two months old = 53

(iii) three months old = 43

(iv) four months old = 16

(v) over six months old = 1

The Cabinet Office, on an annual basis, publishes a report to Parliament on the performance of Departments in replying to Members/Peers correspondence. The Report for 2004 was published on 6 April 2005, *Official Report*, columns 137–40WS.

Emissions Trading

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the amount of greenhouse gases saved by the Government's emissions trading scheme in each year to date, broken down by region. [17586]

Mr. Morley: The UK Emissions Trading Scheme was launched in April 2002 and runs for five years. 31 Direct Participants (DPs) entered the Scheme by bidding annual, cumulative emissions reductions targets set against a 1998–2000 baseline. At the start of the Scheme the participants committed to deliver 3.96 million tonnes CO_2 equivalent (tCO_2e) in emissions reductions by the end of the Scheme (2006). To date, DPs have exceeded targets, and the Scheme has delivered additional emissions reductions of 5.9 million tonnes CO_2e. In addition, six leading companies restated their commitment to the Scheme in November 2004 by offering an additional 8.9 million tCO_2e emissions reductions.

Unfortunately, a regional breakdown of results is not available, as information is compiled on a participant basis, and many participants have a number of sites throughout the UK. In terms of the Scheme's annual progress, a reduction of 4.6 million tCO_2e took place in 2002. Over the first two years (2002 and 2003) the Scheme delivered emissions reductions of almost 5.2 million tCO_2e. Over the first three years (2002, 2003 and 2004), the Scheme delivered emissions reductions totalling 5.9 million tCO_2e.

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress has been made on the inclusion of intra-EU aviation in the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. [17588]

Mr. Morley: A priority for our Presidency of the European Council of Ministers is to press for the inclusion of aviation in the EU Emissions Trading Scheme.

The European Commission adopted a Communication at the end of September on reducing the climate change impacts of aviation. This favours the inclusion of the aviation sector in the EU Emissions Trading Scheme and sets out their intention to establish an Aviation Working Group to take forward the technical work. The Communication also sets out some design recommendations. We welcome this Communication as a key step forward for the EU in tackling these important issues. We will discuss the Communication in the Council of Ministers and aim to agree a way forward during our Presidency.

In our role as Presidency of the EU, the UK held an Aviation and Emissions Trading conference on the 26–27 September that provided an important opportunity for EU environment and transport officials to meet and discuss aviation and climate change. While our priority is emissions trading, we recognise that emissions trading may not be a total solution and continue to explore and discuss options for the use of other economic instruments.

Energy

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she has taken to ensure that advice from her officials is made available to Department for Trade and Industry Ministers on energy matters. [17177]

Mr. Morley: Defra continues to work closely with DTI across a wide range of policy issues on a daily basis. There are a number of formal channels, including several different elements of the Sustainable Energy Policy Network, the Joint Working Group on Energy and Environment, the UK Emissions Trading Group and the Climate Change Programme Review Project Board. These provide a platform for cross-departmental discussion and cooperation at both ministerial and official levels.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the *(a)* EU Committee on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (Habitat), *(b)* EU Committee for the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade and *(c)* EU Scientific Review Group for the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade are planned for the UK Presidency of the EU; who will be presiding over each meeting; which other UK representatives will be present; what provision is in place for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [16463]

Jim Knight: The details relating to these Committees are as follows:

(a) the EU Committee on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (Habitats) is scheduled to meet once during the UK Presidency, on 19 October 2005. Meetings of this Committee are chaired by an official from the European

Commission. Representatives from the UK will include officials from the Department supported by representatives from t he Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). Representatives from the devolved administrations may also attend the meeting.

(b) The EC CITES Committee (The Committee on Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora) is scheduled to meet once during the UK Presidency of the EU, on 13 October 2005. Meetings of this Committee are chaired by an official from the European Commission and UK representation on this occasion will comprise one official from the Department and one from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. Representatives from the devolved administrations may also attend the meeting.

(c) The Scientific Review Group (SRG) is scheduled to meet twice during the UK Presidency of the EU, on 25 October 2005 and 20 December 2005. Meetings of this Group are chaired by an official from the European Commission and are ordinarily attended by DEFRA's scientific advisors from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). Representatives from the devolved administrations may also attend the meeting.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the *(a)* EU Standing Committee on agricultural research and *(b)* EU Community Committee on the farm accountancy data network are planned for the UK Presidency of the EU; who will be presiding over each meeting; what other UK representatives will be present; what provision is in place for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [16598]

Jim Knight: The EU Standing Committee on Agricultural Research will meet once during the current UK Presidency of the EU. The European Commission provides the Chair for the Committee and it will be attended by DEFRA. My Department will consult the devolved Administrations before the meeting and they are also invited to attend.

The EU Community Committee for the Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN) will also meet once during the UK Presidency. This will be chaired by the European Commission. As in previous meetings, there will be two UK representatives, this time from DEFRA and DARDNI.

Genetic Engineering

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will appoint a royal commission on the genetic engineering of food animals. [17449]

Mr. Morley: The Agriculture and Environment Biotechnology Commission was set up by Government in 2000 to look at social and ethical issues relating to developments in biotechnology which have implications for agriculture and the environment, and to provide strategic advice to Government. In its second report it took a strategic look at the issues associated with animals and biotechnology and investigated the regulatory system to see if it could cope with future developments in agriculture and the environment. It generally concluded that the issues facing GM and cloned animals should be considered in the same way as for animals selected through established breeding procedures.

Herbicides

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the information derived from the Government-sponsored farm-scale evaluation of Bayer's herbicide-resistant GM oilseed rape, in respect of the capacity to cross-breed with charlock, was available to Ministers when the Minister for Climate Change voted in the EU Council in relation to France and Greece lifting their bans on GM oilseed rape. [17175]

Mr. Morley: Assessment of the possibility of cross-breeding (hybridisation) between a genetically modified (GM) plant and any wild relatives is a key aspect of the risk assessment carried out prior to any decision on the release or marketing of a GM plant. The capacity for cross-breeding (hybridisation) to occur between oilseed rape and a small number of sexually compatible wild species in the wild in Europe is well known and well documented. The Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment has given advice on this matter. The likelihood of hybridisation occurring and the resulting impact on the environment of such events were part of the assessments for the types of oil seed rape currently approved in the European Union.

This was our understanding when Ministers voted in EU Council and there has been no new information that has altered this understanding. The results of the research that you refer to confirmed our understanding of the likelihood and frequency of cross-pollination between oil-seed rape and its wild relatives. The actual research report was not published until after the vote taken at council.

Hunting Trophies

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she plans to ban the importation of hunting trophies into the United Kingdom. [19195]

Jim Knight: The Government has no plans to ban the importation of hunting trophies. Powers are available to restrict the import and keeping of hunting trophies and we shall not hesitate to use these if there is evidence that this trade is illegal or unsustainable.

Imports

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the proportion of *(a)* organic foods, *(b)* drinking water, *(c)* parsnips and *(d)* yoghurt consumed in the UK which is imported. [16486]

Jim Knight: Estimates are as follows:

(a) For organic foods it is estimated that about 38 per cent. of the types that can be grown in the UK are imported[1].

(b) In the year from April 2003 to March 2004 about 71 per cent. of the 876 million litres of mineral water purchased by members of households in the UK was imported[2].

(c) Imports of parsnips are negligible, so nearly all parsnips consumed in the UK are of UK origin. In 2004 UK production of parsnips was 91 thousand tonnes[3].

(d) In 2004 about 56 per cent. of the 480 thousand tonnes of yoghurt available for use in the UK was imported[3].

[1] *Source:*
Soil Association Organic Food and Farming Report 2004.
[2] *Source:*
Expenditure and Food Survey 2003–04 and HM Revenue and Customs.
[3] *Source:*
Defra estimates of production and HM Revenue and Customs.

Plant Varieties

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will require plant variety officers to maintain open lists of protected varieties under their marketing names. [17201]

Mr. Bradshaw: The publication "Plant Varieties and Seeds Gazette" includes lists of protected varieties under their approved names. An approved name is required by the plant breeders' rights regulations, but it is a decision for the holder of plant breeders' rights whether or not to give a marketing name to the protected variety in addition to this.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact of the Plant Varieties Act 1997. [17202]

Mr. Bradshaw: The main effects of the Plant Varieties Act 1997 were extending the scope of plant breeders' rights to cover all plant genera and species and to include farm saved seed. Since the Act was introduced, applications for 10 species have been received for which UK plant breeders' rights were not available prior to its introduction. UK farmers and plant breeders have collaborated in introducing a system to collect royalties on farm saved seed.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the circumstances under which naturally occurring plants may be *(a)* patented and *(b)* subject to plant breeders' rights. [17203]

Mr. Bradshaw: Plant breeders' rights may be granted on a variety of any plant genera or species. However, simply discovering a variety growing in the wild would not entitle a person to a grant of rights on it. For such rights to be available the naturally occurring variety would need to be further developed.

Plant varieties themselves cannot be patented. However inventions that concern plants may be patentable if the technical feasibility of the invention is not confined to a particular plant variety. Patents may therefore claim plant genera or species but they cannot claim individual varieties.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will take steps to amend the labelling of plants covered by plant breeders' rights to prevent plants whose propagation for sale is prohibited being labelled as propagation illegal. [17204]

Mr. Bradshaw: UK plant breeders' rights are governed by the Plant Varieties Act 1997. While offering protection against unauthorised commercial propagation, plant breeders' rights do not prevent propagation for private and non-commercial purposes. At present we are not proposing to introduce any specific labelling requirements in this respect in relation to plant breeders' rights.

Public Houses

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many rural pubs have closed in each of the last 10 years. [16340]

Barry Gardiner: I have been asked to reply.

Information on how many rural pubs have de-registered for VAT in the last 10 years can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

DTI figures for the whole of the UK, which includes rural and non-rural areas, based solely on VAT de-registrations for bars[1] are shown in the table for 1995 to 2004. Data for 2005 will be available in autumn 2006.

VAT de-registrations 1995–2004

	Number
1995	7,490
1996	6,960
1997	6,660
1998	6,325
1999	6,390
2000	6,200
2001	6,275
2002	6,415
2003	6,855
2004	6,855

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2004, Small Business Service, available at http://www.sbs.gov.uk/vats.

VAT registration and de-registration data do not capture all business activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de- register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 4.3 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2004.

[1] Standard Industrial Classification 554, includes bars, public houses and licensed clubs.

Regional Committees

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the expenditure by each of the *(a)* regional fisheries, ecology and recreation advisory committees and *(b)* regional flood defence committees was in the most recent year for which figures are available. [17495]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency is the principal authority responsible for management of flood risk and salmon and freshwater fisheries in England and Wales.

Regional Fisheries, Ecology and Recreation Advisory Committees are advisory bodies set up to advise the EA on related matters. The only expenditure incurred by them are those associated with their meetings.

The Regional Flood Defence Committees are executive committees of the Environment Agency which help deliver their Flood Risk Management functions. The expenditure by each committee in 2004–05 is given in the following table.

Region	*Committee*	*Expenditure (£ million)*
Anglian	Anglian	77.9
Midlands	Severn Trent	44.5
North East	Northumbria	11.9
	Yorkshire	34.1
North West	North West	35.2
Southern	Southern	58.0
South West	South West	13.8
	Wessex	32.4
Thames	Thames	88.9
Wales	Wales	22.1

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the *(a)* regional fisheries, ecology and recreation advisory committees and *(b)* regional flood defence committees are based on the government office regions. [17496]

Mr. Morley: The regional fisheries, ecology and recreation and advisory committees (RFERACs), and the regional flood defence committees (RFDCs) are based on the boundaries of the Environment Agency regions, not those of the government office regions.

There are 7 RFERACs in England which are aligned to the 7 EA regions (NorthWest, North East, Midlands, Anglia, Thames, Southern and South West). There are 11 RFDCs in England which are similarly aligned, although the EA's North East, and South West regions are split into 2 RFDCs, and the Anglian region is split into 3 RFDCs. All these committee areas are based on river catchments.

Veterinary Fees

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to increase the fees paid to veterinary practitioners under the LVI contract; and if she will make a statement. [17475]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* In November and December, the State Veterinary Service (SVS) will be implementing a backdated increase in LVI fees for work carried out between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2005.

The payment increase is being calculated by applying the relevant Retail Price Index (RPI) figure, firstly to fees for financial year 2003–04, followed by a further RPI increase for work in financial year 2004–05.

There is a commitment to review fees for 2005–06.

The SVS has recently commenced work on a review of how best to use veterinary resource to deliver its remit.

The aim of the review is to agree a strategy for the delivery of veterinary and professional services that meets the current and likely future needs of the SVS and the community it serves. One of the issues to be considered is the possibility of introducing contractually-based arrangements for LVI work.

Water Supply

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received in the last 12 months regarding water supply in East Sussex over the next 10 years. [17564]

Mr. Morley: The Department has had discussions with Southern Water and South East Water, the companies that serve East Sussex, over short-term drought issues. In addition, I have corresponded with the hon. Member for Mid-Sussex (Mr. Soames) about the current water restrictions imposed by South East Water and about the adequacy of water resources to serve further development in Sussex. I have received no specific representations concerning water supply in East Sussex over the next 10 years.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Air Weapons

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many crimes involving the use of air-soft weapons have been recorded in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [17154]

Hazel Blears: Statistics for crimes involving soft air weapons, and other types of imitation firearms, have only been collected separately since April 2004. Full data for 2004–05 are not yet available but will be published in 'Crime in England and Wales 2004–05: Supplementary Volume' in January 2006.

Algerian Nationals

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Algerian nationals have applied for asylum in the UK in each of the last eight years. [18988]

Mr. McNulty: Information on asylum applications by nationality is published quarterly and annually. The information requested is published in the annual bulletin Asylum Statistics United Kingdom 2004. Copies are available from the Library and on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications from Algerian nationals for asylum have been refused in each of the last eight years. [18990]

Mr. McNulty: Information on asylum refusals by nationality is published quarterly and annually. The information requested is published in the annual bulletin Asylum Statistics United Kingdom 2004. Copies are available from the Library and on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Animal Welfare

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will appoint a Royal Commission on the use of wild-caught primates in animal experiments. [17454]

Andy Burnham: The Government have no plans to do so. All non-human primates, whether wild-caught or captive-bred, are afforded special protection under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986. For the use of wild-caught primates to be authorised, there must be no alternative tests appropriate, no suitable captive-bred animals available and the likely benefits must fully justify their use. I would look to both the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Inspectorate and the Animal Procedures Committee to advise on such applications should they arise. We have not authorised any acquisitions of wild-caught primates since 1998.

Asylum

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will allow refused asylum seekers to remain in their National Asylum Support Service accommodation until they are removed from the UK. [19042]

Mr. McNulty: It is Government policy that asylum seekers whose applications have been unsuccessful should leave the UK. Routinely continuing to provide accommodation for those whose claims have been finally determined would undermine this policy. There is nothing to prevent the majority of unsuccessful asylum seekers from leaving immediately and they can request assistance from either the Immigration Service or the International Organization for Migration to do so. Support can be provided for those unable to leave the country immediately due to circumstances entirely beyond their control, by the use of section four accommodation.

BB Guns

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of offences involving imitation firearms involved BB guns in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [17153]

Hazel Blears: Statistics for crimes involving BB guns, and other types of imitation firearms, have only been collected separately since April 2004. Full data for 2004–05 are not yet available but will be published in 'Crime in England and Wales 2004–05: Supplementary Volume' in January 2006.

Environmental Sustainability

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what targets he has set for improving energy efficiency in his Department; and what measures are in place to achieve these targets. [16185]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Office is committed to making best efforts to achieve the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate energy targets; namely to reduce absolute carbon, from fuel and electricity used in buildings on our estate, by 12.5 per cent. by 2010–11, relative to 1999–2000 and to increase the energy efficiency of the buildings on our estate, measured in terms of kWh of fuel and electricity use per square metre of buildings floor area by 15 per cent. over the same period.

In order to meet these targets the Department is benchmarking key office sites in order to identify those buildings which are high energy users. We then propose to undertake energy surveys at those sites, which will form the basis of site-specific action plans.

We will also incorporate energy management clauses within future contracts and include energy performance among the criteria for future site selection. The contract for the management of the new headquarters site at 2 Marsham Street requires our PFI partner to operate the building at 10 per cent. below the best practice benchmark contained in the Government's Energy Efficiency Best Practice Programme Energy Use in Offices Guide.

The public sector Prison Service has an Energy Efficiency Action Plan. A benchmarking guide has been developed and the data used to help set carbon dioxide key performance indicators for each prison.

The Prison Service was the first Government Department/Agency to be accredited under the National Energy Foundation's Scheme for energy efficiency and was re-accredited in 2003. It aims for reaccreditation every three years, which requires evidence of continuous progress.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of electricity used by buildings in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies have come from renewable sources in each year since 1997. [16186]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The proportion of electricity from renewable sources used by the Department is set out in the table. The figures for the Home Office include key sites on the Department's agency estates, except the Prison Service, whose figures are shown separately. Figures for the Department's individual agencies could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

No renewable electricity was purchased in this Department prior to 2000 and no renewable electricity was purchased in the Prison Service prior to 2002–03. The Prison Service are evaluating the use of solar panels, wind turbines and Combined Heat and Power generation. The performance to date is against the targets set in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate that Departments should source at least 10 per cent. electricity from renewable sources by 31 March 2008.

Percentage renewable energy purchased

	Home Office[1]	*Prison Service*
2000–01	10.5	—
2001–02	49.9	—
2002–03	68.9	5.3
2003–04	67.8	6.6
2004–05	70.8	6.5

[1] These figures relate to key buildings only.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what change there was in *(a)* road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions and *(b)* single occupancy car commuting in his Department in (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05. [16188]

Mr. Charles Clarke: *(a)* The Home Office does not collate figures on road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions.

(b) The Home Office does not collate information on single occupancy car commuting but the majority of office sites already have minimal parking facilities. We are currently reviewing the departmental strategy for tackling the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate (FSDGE) travel targets.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what parts of the Department's estate will not be covered by the commitments set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. [16191]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Home Office sites of an area less than 1000m^2 or with less than 50 staff have been excluded from the framework commitments.

For some of the targets we also exclude sites where we do not have direct control of the building.

Guns (Sporting Events)

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the laws banning the use of certain handguns were relaxed in order to allow sporting events involving handguns to take place at the Manchester 2002 Commonwealth Games. [17784]

Hazel Blears: The law was not relaxed to allow the pistol shooting events at the Commonwealth Games hosted by Manchester in 2002. The Secretary of State exercised existing powers under section five of the Firearms Act 1968.

Identity Cards

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with representatives of people with *(a)* facial disfigurements, *(b)* learning disabilities and *(c)* other vulnerable groups on the implications of the identity card scheme. [16729]

Andy Burnham: The identity cards team has had discussions with a number of organisations representing disabled and vulnerable people. During the consultation on the draft Identity Cards Bill in 2004, letters and copies of the consultation document were sent out to the following organisations::

Disability Rights Commission
British Deaf Association
British Institute for Learning Disabilities
MIND
Disabled Drivers Association
RNIB
RNID
Equal Opportunities Commission
British Council of Disabled People

Officials gave a presentation to the RNIB as they were the only group to accept the offer of a meeting with members of the programme team. However, written responses were received from Helping Charities, Helping People (HPHC) and Rethink among others. Changing Faces, a charity that works with people of all ages who are disfigured in any way by birthmarks, cleft lips, burns, facial cancer and palsy, also took part in the consultation exercise on the draft Bill.

Members of the identity cards team attended a consultation event in July 2004, the aim of the event being to examine the legislation on identity cards and to receive feedback from the public and private sector. A number of organisations representing disabled people attended this event including; the Wheelchair User community, the deaf community, Kaleidoscope and the blind community.

Recently, members of the programme team have met the National Housing Federation which represents various housing associations. The ID cards team have also recently met the RNIB on two different occasions.

We have included a very wide range of disabilities in the United Kingdom Passport Service Biometrics trial, which tested the enrolment of 750 people with varied disabilities. Disability Matters Ltd, which was engaged to oversee this part of the trial commented:

> "The biometrics trial has taken comprehensive consideration of the needs of the disabled community by encompassing a pan-impairment approach. We have been impressed by the way that disabled people have been actively involved in this project".

The ID cards programme is in the process of establishing a forum to ensure that all special interest groups are consulted on developments in the ID card scheme, and have regular opportunities to express issues and concerns.

Immigration Detention Centres

Gordon Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many detainees held in immigration detention centres in 2004–05 *(a)* were granted leave to remain, *(b)* were deported and *(c)* remain in detention. [17603]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* Information on the number of individuals detained over a period or the outcome of their cases is currently not available. This information would be available only by examination of individual case files at disproportionate cost.

Quarterly snapshots are published showing the number of people detained under Immigration Act powers on the last Saturday of each quarter. The data from 2004 to the second quarter of 2005 is published on a quarterly basis and can be found in the Quarterly Asylum Statistics publications on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Indefinite Leave to Remain

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications by post using form SET(M) for indefinite leave to remain as a spouse or unmarried partner of a person settled in the

UK were refused in the year to 15 September on the grounds that the application was made more than 28 days before the completion of two years' stay in the relevant category. [18049]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* Approximately 150 customers were refused Indefinite Leave to Remain between the 16 September 2004 and 30 June 2005 on the basis that he or she had made a premature application as the spouse of someone settled in the United Kingdom.

This information has not been quality assured and is not a National Statistic. It should be treated as provisional management information.

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the leaflet setting out guidance for the completion of form SET(M) for indefinite leave to remain was last revised. [18050]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* All the application forms used for leave to remain applications including the SET(M) form were revised in September 2005. At the same time that the forms were revised the guidance notes used with those forms were updated.

Party Conferences

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much additional funding was made available to Sussex police for policing of the Labour party conference in Brighton, including preparatory work. [19016]

Hazel Blears: I have approved a special grant of up to £3.692 million to Sussex police for additional costs incurred in policing this year's Labour party conference at Brighton.

Passports

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many UK passports have been *(a)* lost and *(b)* stolen in London in each of the last five years. [8202]

Andy Burnham: It is not possible for the UK Passport Service to identify exactly how many passports were reportedly lost or stolen in the London area, however the London and Peterborough passport offices, which serve the Greater London area, recorded 89,196 reports of passports that were lost or stolen in the year from 1 April 2004. This figure may include losses in areas outside of London, including from abroad while some losses in the London area may well have been reported to other passport offices.

The total figures for losses across the UK for the last five years are as follows:

	Total
2000	114,624
2001	148,230
2002	166,358
2003	184,301
2004	306,406

Police

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to roll out Safer Neighbourhood Policing teams in the *(a)* Bedford, *(b)* Earlsfield, *(c)* Wandsworth Common, *(d)* Nightingale and *(e)* Furzedown wards of the Tooting constituency. [18042]

Hazel Blears: The roll-out of Safer Neighbourhoods teams is an operational matter for the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police.

The Government have made a commitment that, by 2008, every area in England and Wales will benefit from dedicated, visible, accessible and responsive neighbourhood policing teams.

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many ethnic minority police officers there are in *(a)* Wandsworth and *(b)* other London boroughs, broken down by (i) rank, (ii) year joined, (iii) gender and (iv) faith. [18115]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not collected centrally. A breakdown of ethnic police officers by rank and gender is available at police force level only. These figures can be found in Home Office Statistical Bulletin number 12/05, "Police Service Strength England and Wales, 31 March 2005" available on the RDS website: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/index.htm

Available data for London boroughs are for total police strength only with no further breakdown.

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to ensure that police community consultative groups are independent and effective critical friends of police services. [16418]

Hazel Blears: Section 96 of the Police Act 1996 places a duty on police authorities to make arrangements for obtaining the views of people in the force area about matters concerning the policing of the area. The Act does not specify that this duty should be fulfilled through the establishment of Police Community Consultative Groups which have no formal status in statute. The White Paper 'Building Communities, Beating Crime—A better police service for the 21st century' sets out the Government's proposals for the police and their partners to engage more effectively with local communities. Moving beyond reliance on public meetings as a sole form of engagement is a key aim of the Government's reforms.

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many suspects arrested by North Wales police in the last three years for which records are available and in whose case proceedings are complete resided in Wales outside the North Wales police authority area; [17170]

(2) how many suspects arrested by North Wales police in the last three years for which records are available and in whose cases proceedings are complete resided in England. [17173]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Reoffending (Hertfordshire)

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the reoffending rate of offenders within the Hertfordshire probation area was in each year between *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2003–04; and if he will make a statement. [18284]

Hazel Blears: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2533W. The information requested is not currently available.

Road Safety

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many foreign nationals have been extradited for driving without due care and attention in each of the last 10 years. [17277]

Paul Goggins: None. With a maximum sentence of six months, the specific offence of "driving without due care and attention" is not an offence for which extradition can be granted. The threshold for such offences is a maximum sentence of at least 12 months.

Security

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has for further co-operation with G8 justice ministers on security issues. [17447]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I intend to continue cooperation with G8 ministers on issues of security. Most of my meetings are with counterparts who are Interior ministers. There is also contact with those dealing with justice issues. I recently visited the USA where I met with Homeland Security Secretary Chertoff and the Attorney General Gonzales from the Department of Justice.

I have had a meeting with Russian counterparts—the President's administrator, Victor Ivanov, Rashid Nurgaliev, the Minister of the Interior, and Ivan Chaika, Minister of Justice—as part of the EU Partnership Council in October 2005 in Luxembourg.

I also met bilaterally with the French Interior Minister Sarkozy in London in October 2005 which included discussion about security-related issues.

I will continue to participate in G8 Justice and Home Affairs ministerial meetings. This will include the G8 Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial Informal Meeting in Russia in June 2006, where it is expected that security issues figure on the agenda.

Statutory Instruments

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the statutory instruments sponsored by his Department since 1997. [10549]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Lists of all statutory instruments (SIs) from 1 January 1998 to 30 June 2005, prepared by the Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI) have today been placed in the Library. These lists, prepared in alphabetical order by Department, detail for each year from 1998 the number and title of each statutory instrument sponsored by the Department. There are separate lists for general and local SIs. SIs which were Orders in Council are listed as Privy Council Office (PCO) instruments.

Taser Weapons

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police forces in England and Wales use Taser stun guns; and if he will make a statement. [17219]

Hazel Blears: On 14 September 2004, the then Home Secretary (Mr. Blunkett) announced that he had agreed that Chief Officers of all forces in England and Wales could make Taser available to authorised firearms officers as a less lethal weapon for use in situations where a firearms authority has been granted in accordance with criteria laid down in the Association of Chief Police Officers Manual of Guidance on the Police Use of Firearms. I understand that 28 forces in England and Wales are now deploying Taser.

Terrorism Act

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been *(a)* arrested, *(b)* charged and *(c)* convicted under the Terrorism Act 2000, broken down by (i) year, (ii) gender, (iii) ethnicity and (iv) religion. [16739]

Hazel Blears: Statistics on arrests under the Terrorism Act 2000 are available on the Home Office website. These statistics are provided by the police and are not available broken down as requested.

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many instances of stop and search there have been under section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000, broken down by *(a)* city, *(b)* year, *(c)* gender, *(d)* ethnicity and *(e)* religion. [16740]

Hazel Blears: Statistics on stop and search are available in two annual publications that can be accessed on the Research, Development and Statistics page of the Home Office website.

The Home Office Statistical Bulletin: 'Arrests for Notifiable Offences and the Operation of Certain Police Powers under PACE; England and Wales,' details stop-searches under the Terrorism Act 2000, by police force over financial years. The bulletin also shows subsequent arrests.

The document 'Publications under Section 95 of the Criminal Justice Act; Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System' details stop-searches under the Terrorism Act 2000 by ethnicity. Figures are collated by police force over financial years and they also show subsequent arrests under the Terrorism Act and other legislation.

The statistics available show the number of stop-searches and the number of resulting arrests under both the Terrorism Act and other legislation by financial year and ethnicity. However, no details of resulting charges or prosecutions directly from Section 44 stop-searches, because the figures are not collated in this way. Gender and religion statistics for those stop-searched under the Terrorism Act 2000 are not recorded.

Zimbabwe

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cases he has received in the last 12 months involving deportation to Zimbabwe; in how many cases he has exercised his discretion to stop deportation; and how many individuals have been removed to Zimbabwe. [16932]

Mr. McNulty: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary outlined our policy on the return of failed asylum seekers to Zimbabwe in a statement to the House on 27 June. He updated the House by written statements on 6 and 18 July.

On 4 August, in a case relating to the treatment of failed asylum seekers upon their return to Zimbabwe, the High Court granted permission for a substantive Judicial Review but deferred the substantive hearing to allow the specialist Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) to hear a test case.

Quarterly statistics relating to asylum issues are published by the Immigration and Nationality Directorate on the Home Office website. The latest report was published in August. From those figures, I am able to report that since we resumed the removal of failed Zimbabwean asylum claimants to Zimbabwe in November 2004 and June 2005, 260 Zimbabweans were removed from the United Kingdom. Of those, 70 elected to leave voluntarily.

Statistics relating to other cases, where asylum was not claimed, are published annually and are not available at this stage for 2005.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Affordable Homes

Susan Kramer: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many affordable homes have been *(a)* started and *(b)* completed in the last five years in each London borough. [15863]

Yvette Cooper: The numbers of starts and completions of affordable dwellings for the last five years on behalf of London boroughs are tabled. The numbers include homes for rent and for low cost home ownership, provided through new build dwellings, acquisitions and refurbishments, via the Housing Corporation Approved Development Programme including the Key Worker Living in 2004–05. They exclude (Transitional) Local Authority Social Housing Grant, the Starter Homes Initiative, and s106 agreements where there was no Housing Corporation Funding.

Starts on site in any one year do not necessarily relate to completions (or to funding) in that year owing to the timing of funding and different rates of construction.

Completions and starts on behalf of London boroughs from 2000–01 to 2004–05

	2000–01		2001–02	
	Starts	Completions	Starts	Completions
Barking and Dagenham	24	68	18	50
Barnet	77	116	18	138
Bexley	97	45	36	26
Brent	184	359	165	322
Bromley	115	127	77	75
Camden	69	124	41	146
City of London	0	0	0	4
Croydon	215	154	152	350
Ealing	75	148	391	156
Enfield	587	232	251	431
Greenwich	225	231	125	327
Hackney	306	306	243	257
Hammersmith and Fulham	100	177	226	149
Haringey	236	265	255	286
Harrow	72	103	174	123
Havering	93	20	21	197
Hillingdon	99	253	106	185
Hounslow	143	40	47	187
Islington	161	214	205	152
Kensington and Chelsea	82	61	0	72
Kingston upon Thames	66	118	26	71
Lambeth	294	134	161	244
Lewisham	142	261	238	229
Merton	97	57	42	76
Newham	265	223	309	405
Redbridge	94	101	89	199
Richmond upon Thames	43	54	93	57
Southwark	172	258	281	223
Sutton	253	212	68	153
Tower Hamlets	546	205	175	296
Waltham Forest	181	241	179	224
Wandsworth	96	94	50	130
Westminster	179	394	106	349
Total	5,390	5,395	4,278	6,289

	2002–03		2003–04	
	Starts	Completions	Starts	Completions
Barking and Dagenham	7	28	68	22
Barnet	143	99	223	132
Bexley	34	150	79	68
Brent	326	224	319	243
Bromley	63	146	95	66
Camden	216	150	225	165
City of London	0	0	0	8
Croydon	173	230	226	125
Ealing	286	179	364	244
Enfield	233	293	347	256
Greenwich	245	149	962	586
Hackney	306	373	561	482
Hammersmith and Fulham	245	103	163	488
Haringey	210	167	385	349
Harrow	68	121	109	111
Havering	63	45	45	56
Hillingdon	131	113	107	168
Hounslow	188	118	337	327
Islington	226	262	707	315
Kensington and Chelsea	125	112	142	236
Kingston upon Thames	25	43	114	55
Lambeth	202	272	424	378
Lewisham	447	234	377	303
Merton	26	78	145	62
Newham	239	327	535	304
Redbridge	222	128	215	161
Richmond upon Thames	27	15	202	109
Southwark	237	250	559	340
Sutton	128	196	375	145
Tower Hamlets	176	404	744	336
Waltham Forest	90	196	110	115
Wandsworth	100	116	311	108
Westminster	68	180	265	210
Total	5,275	5,501	9,840	7 073

	2004–05	
	Starts	*Completions*
Barking and Dagenham	324	154
Barnet	98	174
Bexley	142	91
Brent	539	315
Bromley	90	157
Camden	228	336
City of London	0	30
Croydon	389	274
Ealing	598	402
Enfield	506	369
Greenwich	334	458
Hackney	111	359
Hammersmith and Fulham	370	376
Haringey	493	272
Harrow	310	141
Havering	44	126
Hillingdon	151	154
Hounslow	387	165
Islington	662	261
Kensington and Chelsea	127	79
Kingston upon Thames	141	195
Lambeth	229	341
Lewisham	330	504
Merton	157	146
Newham	700	426
Redbridge	174	274
Richmond upon Thames	69	192
Southwark	925	639
Sutton	228	349
Tower Hamlets	757	153
Waltham Forest	284	162
Wandsworth	160	413
Westminster	365	280
Total	11,088	8,767

Source:
Housing Corporation

Council Staff (Absenteeism)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average level of absenteeism was in *(a)* each local council in England and *(b)* his Department in the latest year for which figures are available. [17161]

Mr. Woolas: Data on sickness absence in local authorities is collected as part of the Local Government Best Value Performance Information (BVPI) series. A full list of all local authorities with information on staff days lost to sickness in 2003–04 in each may be found at www.bvpi.gov.uk. The equivalent information for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was contained in the reply from the hon. Member for Poplar and Canning Town (Jim Fitzpatrick) on the 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 404–05W

Council Tax

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the Government intends to bring forward legislation to delay the council tax revaluation in England; and whether the legislation is planned to form part of a wider Bill. [17645]

Mr. Woolas: The Government introduced the Council Tax (New Valuation Lists for England) Bill in the House of Commons on 13 October 2005.

The Bill removes the requirements in the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for there to be a revaluation of domestic properties, in England, for council tax purposes on 1 April 2007, and at 10 yearly intervals thereafter. It will provide new powers to set a future date for the revaluation by Order so that it can be part of a fully developed package of funding reforms, taking full account of the work of Sir Michael Lyons' inquiry into Local Government Funding.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what the new timetable is for the council tax revaluation in England; [17305]

(2) whether the Government plan to conduct a council tax revaluation. [17359]

Mr. Woolas: The Government have announced that they are postponing the revaluation of council tax in England. They will legislate to substitute for the current revaluation date of 2007 a power to set the date for revaluation by secondary legislation. This will provide for revaluation to take place in such a way as to take full account of Sir Michael Lyons' work on the functions of local government as well as the financing. The Government do not believe that revaluation will occur during this Parliament.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister for what reasons the council tax revaluation has been postponed in England. [17355]

Mr. Woolas: Council tax revaluation in England has been postponed for the reasons set out in the Government's announcement of 20 September, copies of which are available in the Library of the House. Revaluation in Wales is a matter for the Welsh Assembly Government.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the *(a)* money terms and *(b)* real terms percentage changes in (i) council tax and (ii) business rates in (A) England and (B) Great Britain between 1997–98 and 2005–06. [17383]

Mr. Woolas: The requested information for England is tabled as follows. Figures for Scotland and Wales are a matter for the Scottish Executive and the Welsh Assembly Government respectively.

	Average Band D council tax, 2 adults		*Net business rate yield*	
	Cash prices (£)	*2005–06 prices[1] (£)*	*Cash prices (£ million)*	*2005–06 prices[1] (£ million)*
1997–98	688	843	13,293	16,295
2005–06	1,214	1,214	17,618	17,618
Percentage change	76.5	43.9	32.5	8.1

[1] Adjusted using the All-items Retail Prices Index as at April.

Source:
BR returns (council tax); NNDR returns and central government information on central and crown lists (business rates)

For council tax, it is usual to quote the average Band D figure for a 2-adult household when making comparisons over time. Average business rate figures are not routinely quoted, however, given the very wide variations in the rateable value of each property, and hence in the average rate bill. The business rate figures quoted in the table are therefore for the national yield.

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate his Department has made of the number of homes in England that would be *(a)* subject to revaluation and *(b)* likely to move up one or more bands in the rebanding process. [17217]

Mr. Woolas: There are nearly 22 million such dwellings as at September 2005. No re-banding scheme has been designed for England.

Design for Manufacture Competition

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the location of each site in the Design for Manufacture competition; and what the estimated number is of *(a)* commercial and *(b)* affordable households to be constructed at each site in relation to the competition. [17446]

Yvette Cooper: There is no significant commercial property to be developed on the 10 Design for Manufacture Competition sites, other than incidental corner shops and community facilities that will be subject to detailed planning approval. These will be detailed during the next stage as the proposals for each individual site go through the planning process.

The number of homes on each site is as follows:

Oxley Park, Milton Keynes, Phase 2 site. Total of 145 homes, of which 43 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Oxford Road, Former Territorial Army Centre, Aylesbury Vale. Total of 100 homes, of which 30 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Upton, Northampton, Site D2. Total of 165 homes, or which 36 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Allerton Bywater Millennium Community, Leeds, Yorkshire. Total of 150 homes, of which 30 are anticipated to be affordable.

School Road, Hastings. Total of 12 homes, with affordable housing level to be determined.

Horns Cross, Stone, Dartford. Total of 37 homes, of which 11 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Former Rowan High School site, Merton, London. Total of 180 homes, of which 180 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Former Renny Lodge Hospital, London Road, Newport Pagnell, Bucks. Total of 60 homes, of which 20 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Former Park Prewett Hospital, Kingsclere Road, Basingstoke. Total of 137 homes, of which 47 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Former Linton Hospital site, Maidstone. Total of 123 homes, of which 43 are anticipated to be affordable housing.

Fire Control Centres

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will conduct a public consultation exercise on the proposal for a south east regional fire control centre; and if he will make a statement. [17455]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The FiReControl project is a national project, and stakeholder consultation took place at national level before the decision was taken to proceed (the consultation paper was issued in December 2003 and a copy placed in the House Libraries). All fire and rescue authorities were consulted, including all those in the south east, and the practitioners' forum. There have since been consultations on key issues such as finance and governance and the outline business case, and consultation with stakeholders will continue throughout the life of the project.

For further information on the FiReControl project please visit www.firecontrol.odpm.gov.uk.

Homelessness

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many homeless households with dependent children in all forms of temporary accommodation there have been in each year since 2000, broken down by Government region. [16987]

Yvette Cooper: Information reported each quarter by local authorities about their activities under homelessness legislation includes the number of households in temporary accommodation on the last day of the quarter and, since 2002, separately identifies those that include dependent children or a pregnant woman.

The total number of households in temporary accommodation (as arranged by local authorities) as at 31 March in each year since 2000, and the number of these with dependent children or an expectant mother since 2002, in each region of England are presented in the following table. In January 2005 the Government announced in "Homes for All" its commitment to halve the number of all households in temporary accommodation by 2010.

Households in temporary accommodation[1] arranged by local authorities, by Government office region

	As at 31 March:			
	2000	*2001*	*2002*	
	All households	*All households*	*All households*	*Of which: with children*
North East	1,110	1,480	1,820	1,270
North West	2,130	2,070	1,890	990
Yorkshire and the Humber	1,400	2,700	1,830	870
East Midlands	1,980	1,940	2,070	1,440
West Midlands	2,060	2,070	1,840	1,030
East of England	4,470	5,180	6,350	3,850
London	37,640	42,620	46,390	33,010
South East	9,680	11,560	12,230	8,320
South West	4,790	5,600	5,790	3,860
England	65,170	75,200	80,210	54,660

	As at 31 March:					
	2003		*2004*		*2005*[2]	
	All household	*of which with children*	*All households*	*of which with children*	*All households*	*of which: with children*
North East	440	220	1,020	350	910	520
North West	2,500	1,330	2,960	1,450	3,000	1,900
Yorkshire and the Humber	2,240	1,160	2,400	1,290	2,100	1,110
East Midlands	2,420	1,750	2,820	2,090	3,030	2,250
West Midlands	1,570	1,050	2,230	1,420	2,630	1,750

	As at 31 March:					
	2003		2004		2005[2]	
	All household	of which with children	All households	of which with children	All households	of which: with children
East of England	7,630	4,870	8,220	5,650	8,250	5,480
London	52,690	37,620	58,820	44,620	61,990	46,360
South East	13,020	9,480	13,080	9,510	12,440	8,520
South West	6,530	4,030	6,150	4,190	6,740	4,780
England	89,040	61,510	97,680	70,580	101,070	72,670

[1] Households in accommodation arranged by local authorities pending inquiries or after being accepted as homeless under the 1996 Act (includes residual cases awaiting re-housing under the 1985 Act).
[2] Provisional data
Note:
Totals may not equal the sum of components because of rounding.

Housing

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions his Department has had with the private sector in Coventry, South to increase housing development. [18318]

Yvette Cooper: There have been no specific discussions between the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the private sector in relation to increasing housing development in Coventry, South.

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which local authorities have held ballots on stock transfer; and which have opted for *(a)* transfer to housing associations, *(b)* transfer to arm's length management organisations and *(c)* to remain with the council. [18047]

Yvette Cooper: A list of local authorities that have held ballots on stock transfer and the outcome of those ballots; and lists of authorities that have had their stock options appraisal signed off by the relevant Government Office for transfer, ALMO, retention, and a mixed model, have been placed in the Library of the House.

Local Authority Pensions

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent estimate he has made of the cost to public funds of local authority pensions per year. [17162]

Mr. Woolas: The most recent actuarial valuation of the Local Government Pension Scheme funds was carried out on 31 March 2004. Analysis of this data indicates that local authorities in England and Wales are committing about £3 billion during 2005–06 to ensure the on-going solvency of the scheme.

Lyons Inquiry

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Lyons Inquiry is a public authority under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. [17357]

Mr. Woolas: The Lyons Inquiry is not a public authority under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act.

Minerals Planning Guidance

Mr. Betts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will issue further guidance to all planning authorities on the interpretation of Minerals Planning Guidance 3. [16606]

Yvette Cooper: The policy advice contained in Minerals Planning Guidance Note 3 is clear. We have no plans to review or revise this guidance.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he has taken to satisfy himself that minerals and planning authorities are applying minerals planning guidance 3 consistently to decisions on applications for surface mining. [16608]

Yvette Cooper: The First Secretary of State does not examine each decision in terms of national policy. It is the responsibility of the Minerals Planning Authorities to consider and determine each application on its merits, within the context provided by national, regional and local planning policies, including guidance contained in MPG3. If, following a refusal of planning permission, an applicant feels that policies have not been complied with, without good reason, an appeal may be lodged and will be considered by an independent planning inspector.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he has taken to satisfy himself whether policy 45 on opencast coal as contained in the draft submission of the North East regional spatial strategy conforms to the alternative tests of environmental acceptability or community benefits as contained in minerals planning guidance 3. [16607]

Yvette Cooper: On 5 October the Government made representations to the Secretary of the Panel which will hold an examination into the draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North East of England. It indicated that since policy 45 on opencast coal applied a double test of environmental acceptability and a requirement to yield local community benefits, it conflicted with Minerals Planning Guidance note 3. The representation indicated the Government's view that a case has not been made for this departure from national policy and a regionally specific policy was therefore not justified in the RSS. The examination in public into the draft RSS, which is due to be held in spring next year, will provide an opportunity for the discussion and testing of matters selected by the panel following their consideration of all the representations made.

Population Statistics

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the population of Milton Keynes has been in each of the last seven years. [17728]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Mark Lancaster, dated 18 October 2005:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question concerning the population in Milton Keynes over the last seven years. (17728)

Below is a table showing the estimated population for Milton Keynes from 1998 to 2004.

Total population, Milton Keynes, mid-1998 to mid-2004

	Number
1998	202,900
1999	206,700
2000	209,800
2001	212,700
2002	214,100
2003	215,700
2004	216,700

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Second Homes

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the number of English residents who have a second home within the United Kingdom. [16948]

Yvette Cooper: Estimates from the Survey of English Housing show that for the period 2003–04 to 2004–05 there were about 293,000 English households with second homes in Great Britain.

Note that this will under-state the actual number of second homes in Great Britain because some households will have more than one additional home.

Data from the Survey of English Housing does not separately identify second homes in Northern Ireland. Consequently an estimate for the United Kingdom is not available.

Small Business Rate Relief

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he expects an increased take-up rate of small business rate relief to result in revenue reduction for *(a)* local councils and *(b)* central Government. [17231]

Mr. Woolas: No. The allocation of money to local authorities for 2005–06 was announced through the local government finance settlement in February and will not be affected by increased take-up of small business rate relief. On the basis of research conducted before the relief scheme came into effect, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects that the amount of relief paid by local authorities on a national basis will be balanced by an amount raised from those businesses not eligible for the relief. However, if the actual total differs from these estimates, the Secretary of State has the power to adjust the small business non-domestic rating multiplier to address any imbalance.

CABINET OFFICE

Civil Servants

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many civil servants are on fixed-term contracts. [19316]

Mr. Hutton: The number of civil servants on fixed-term or casual contracts as at 30 June 2005 (Quarter 2 2005) was 17,280 (full-time equivalents). This figure is an unpublished best estimate, by the Office for National Statistics, and relates to staff not on a permanent civil service contract.

Detailed analyses of the civil service are published annually in 'Civil Service Statistics', copies of which are available in the Library. The latest version was published on 7 February 2005, based on information as at April 2004.

Gas Storage (Preesall, Lancs)

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what the policy of the Duchy of Lancaster is towards the proposed use of Duchy land by Canatxx Gas Storage Ltd. and Canatxx Energy Ventures Ltd. for a new gas storage facility at Preesall, Lancashire; and if he will make a statement. [18708]

Mr. Hutton: The Duchy of Lancaster recognises the importance of diversifying all energy sources within the United Kingdom to ensure a continuity of supply. However, the Duchy has informed Canatxx that it will not open any discussions in relation to the proposal for a new gas storage facility at Preesall, Lancashire until such time as Canatxx has completed the local planning process and obtained a planning consent for its scheme.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list the occasions on which *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials from his Department have communicated with Canatxx Gas Storage Ltd., Canatxx Energy Ventures Ltd. or a company associated with Canatxx with regard to their proposals for a new gas storage facility at Preesall, Lancashire (i) by letter, (ii) by e-mail, (iii) by telephone and (iv) in person; and what the content was in each case. [18709]

Mr. Hutton: The Duchy office has had a wide variety of communications with Canatxx which has primarily been of an informative nature. It would not be appropriate to publish the content of these communications as this would be of a commercially confidential nature.

Health Service Report

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will publish the Strategy Unit Report on the structure of the Health Service. [18315]

Mr. Hutton: The parts of the report "Health Strategy Review—Analytical Report" by the Strategy Unit that were eligible for disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (the entirety of phase 1 of the report) were published on 1 July 2005 and are available on the Strategy Unit website at www.strategy.gov.uk.

Ministerial Visits

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster which, if any Cabinet Ministers are planning to visit India in December. [16976]

Mr. Hutton: For security reasons it would not be appropriate to comment on any future visits abroad by Ministers. Ministers' future engagements are announced as and when appropriate.

Since 1999, the Government have published an annual list of overseas travel by Cabinet Ministers costing more than £500. Information for the year 2005–06 will be published as soon as it is ready after the end of the financial year.

Taskforces

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what statistics he has collated on the number of taskforces set up by Government Departments in each year since 1990. [17140]

Mr. Hutton: The annual publication "Public Bodies", replaced in 2005 by an internet-accessible database, has recorded those taskforces, ad hoc advisory groups and reviews in existence as at 31 March each year since 2002. Before that four separate reports, published in January, July and December 2000 and October 2001, provided information on taskforces, ad hoc advisory groups and reviews in existence between 1 May 1997 and 31 March 2001. Prior to that no central statistics are available. Copies of all the reports, the "Public Bodies" publications and a database printout of the position at 31 March 2004 have been placed in the Library. A database printout of the position as at 31 March 2005 will be placed in the Library shortly.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Written Parliamentary Questions

34. **Mr. McLoughlin** To ask the Leader of the House if he will make arrangements for the tabling of written parliamentary questions in any recess longer than three weeks. [18511]

Mr. Hoon: I have no plans to propose changes to current practice.

The Government have always taken the view that the House should retain the principle of tabling questions during periods when the House is sitting and Ministers are in attendance to respond to parliamentary scrutiny.

Ministers remain accountable for the work of their Departments, and Members can and do correspond with them during recesses.

Legislation (Programming)

35. **Sir Nicholas Winterton:** To ask the Leader of the House if he will review the procedures for the programming of legislation. [18512]

Nigel Griffiths: My right hon. Friend has no plans to do so.

It has not been that long since both the Modernisation Committee and the Procedure Committee looked at this subject. Following their reports, the House approved changes to the relevant Orders (including making them into permanent Standing Orders) in October 2004.

Business (e-Tabling)

38. **Chris Bryant** To ask the Leader of the House if he will ask the Select Committee on the Modernisation of the House to consider the extension of e-tabling to early-day motions and other business of the House. [18515]

Mr. Hoon: I would be happy to receive representations on this matter. The more we do to facilitate the use of technology by Members, the better.

The procedure for tabling questions has been fairly successful. I understand that around half of those who are eligible to table questions have registered for the new service, and that in recent months between one quarter and one third of questions have been tabled in this way.

Departmental Vehicles

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Leader of the House how many vehicles for which his Office is responsible are fitted with retreaded tyres. [17988]

Mr. Hoon: For information on the use of retread tyres in vehicles provided to my Office by the Government Car and Despatch Agency I refer the hon. Member to the letter of 11 October 2005 which he received from the Chief Executive of the GCDA, reference UIN15087 and UIN15088. Copies of this letter are available in the Library.

Great George Street (Closure)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Leader of the House whether he was consulted about the closure of the southbound carriageway of Great George street in July during a period when the House was sitting. [17918]

Mr. Hoon: I had not been aware of the closure of Great George street during July.

However, I have been consulted about arrangements for road closures and other works in relation to improving the security arrangements for the Palace of Westminster, including the partial closure of Bridge street during the summer recess.

Where appropriate, the House authorities and my office will keep Members informed of these arrangements to assist their access.

Steel Barriers

Mr. Purchase: To ask the Leader of the House pursuant to his written statement of 13 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 32WS, on security arrangements (Palace of Westminster), what assessment was made of the impact on *(a)* traffic congestion and *(b)* public inconvenience of the steel barriers; and if he will place a copy of the assessment in the Library. [19250]

Mr. Hoon: It is not the practice of this House to divulge details of individual security projects but the hon. Gentleman may wish to know that the project to

replace the concrete blockers and replace them with steel barriers included full consultation with Westminster City Council, Transport for London and English Heritage.

Volunteering

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Leader of the House how many volunteering positions his Department has offered in each of the last five years. [17877]

Mr. Hoon: The Privy Council (PCO), which provides the administrative support to my Office, has not offered any volunteering positions within the last five years. The PCO does, however, encourage and support volunteering by staff members.

TRANSPORT

A166 (Stamford Bridge)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether any bids for financial support or assistance have been made during the past five years from North or East Yorkshire highway authorities to replace or widen the existing bridge or construct a second bridge on the A166 over the River Derwent at Stamford Bridge. [17681]

Dr. Ladyman: No such bid has been made during the past five years. A bid to strengthen the existing bridge was received in East Riding of Yorkshire Council's 2004–05 Annual Progress Report, submitted in July 2005. This bid is currently being considered and a decision will be made in the annual Local Transport Capital Expenditure settlement, due to be announced before Christmas.

A27

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent on improvements to the A27 in West Sussex since 1997. [19027]

Dr. Ladyman: The expenditure from April 1999 to date on improvement schemes on the A27 in West Sussex totals £8.9 million. There is no information available for expenditure between 1997 and 1998.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to report on the consultation exercise regarding improvements to the A27 at Chichester. [19028]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency is currently finalising its analysis of the public consultation and expects to report by the end of the year. That work will be considered in the light of advice from the region on priorities, which is expected early next year and an announcement about improvements to the A27 at Chichester should then be made next spring.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his timetable is for further consultation on road improvements to the A27 around Worthing. [19029]

Dr. Ladyman: The programme for the consultation on road improvements to the A27 around Worthing will need to be reviewed in the light of the advice from the region on priorities, which is expected early next year.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the impact of the installation of traffic lights at the Grove Lodge Roundabout on the A27 in Worthing. [19030]

Dr. Ladyman: No assessment has yet been carried out regarding the impact of the new traffic lights at the Grove Lodge Roundabout in Worthing. The signalisation of Grove Lodge Roundabout was completed in the summer of 2005 and will be assessed in early 2006.

The signals are the first phase of improvements at this location. In early 2006 it is also proposed to investigate the inclusion of a pedestrian crossing facility, and a local widening of the A27 (within the Highway boundary) at the entry and exit to the roundabout.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will visit Worthing to discuss congestion on the A27 with local residents and councillors. [19031]

Dr. Ladyman: Meetings with local residents and councillors can be held once the region has provided advice on its priorities, which should be early next year.

Aircraft Landings (Deportations)

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what records are maintained by his Department of aircraft which land in the United Kingdom and which are transporting individuals who are being deported or otherwise involuntarily transferred from the United States to another country. [16675]

Ms Buck: No information on aircraft transporting individuals being deported or involuntarily transferred from the United States is held by the Department.

Aviation Subsidies

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost was of subsidising airline routes in the United Kingdom using public service obligations. [17971]

Ms Buck: I refer my hon. Friend to my answer of 9 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 616W.

Blue Badges

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many cases of blue badges being stolen from parked cars were reported in the last 12 months; and what steps he is taking to prevent the fraudulent use of stolen blue badges. [17017]

Ms Buck: Blue badge theft would be reported directly to individual local authorities, who are responsible for administering the blue badge scheme, including issuing badges and replacing lost or stolen ones. There is no legal requirement for local authorities to provide the Department with this information nor does the Department currently ask for that information as part of its annual blue badge statistical survey of local authorities in England. The devolved administrations are responsible for the scheme in other parts of the UK.

Vehicle crime is a matter that the Government continue to take very seriously and initiatives continue to be taken forward to reduce levels of crime and theft in particular. In relation to theft of blue badges, the Department is currently working closely with the Home Office to assess the position and consider what action can be taken.

The issues of abuse and misuse of blue badges are of particular concern to us. Indeed, these were considered during a recent comprehensive review of the blue badge scheme, which concluded with 47 recommendations from our statutory advisers, the Disabled Persons' Transport Advisory Committee, including a number of additional enforcement measures. The majority of the recommendations have been accepted by the Government and are being taken forward. The enforcement measures include a power for parking enforcement officers to inspect badges and the introduction of a national database of badge holders which, once implemented, we believe will be effective in reducing instances of misuse.

Power to inspect

Provision for a power to inspect badges has already been included in the Traffic Management Act 2004. The Department went out to consultation on the guidance for enforcement officers and badge holders in July this year and we intend to introduce the new power early next year by Commencement Order.

Database of blue badge holders

A research project looking into the feasibility of a national database of blue badge holders is now under way. It is scheduled for completion in December 2005, when a final report with recommendations on the way forward will be available.

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people have been prosecuted in the last five years for fraudulently using disabled parking badges. [18151]

Ms Buck: Enforcement of the disabled persons' parking badge scheme is a matter for local authorities. There is no legal requirement for local authorities to provide the Department with details of any such prosecutions nor does the Department currently ask for that information as part of its annual Blue Badge statistical survey of local authorities in England. The devolved Administrations are responsible for the scheme in other parts of the UK.

The issues of misuse and abuse of badges were considered as part of the recent review of the Blue Badge scheme. In concluding the review some 47 recommendations were made to Ministers through the Disabled Persons' Transport Advisory Committee, the Department's statutory advisers on the transport needs of disabled people, including a number of enforcement measures. The Government accepted most of these and is currently taking them forward. A summary of the recommendations and the Government's response to them was placed in the House Libraries on 18 December 2002.

Bus Services

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his strategy is for increasing the number of subsidised bus services in local authority areas outside London; and if he will make a statement. [18575]

Ms Buck: The total of local bus kilometres subsidised by English local authorities outside London has risen from 277 million in 1996–97 to 368 million last year. Decisions on which services to support are for individual local authorities, taking account of local needs and priorities, and in light of the resources available to them. These resources include the Revenue Support Grant and also this Department's Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (this grant totals £53 million this year).

We are encouraging local authorities to get best value from their expenditure on bus support through for example the introduction of local accessibility planning and the publication of a best practice guide on tendering procedures.

Cycle Lanes

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of cycle lanes have been constructed in England in each year since 1997, broken down by local authority area. [17348]

Derek Twigg: Information on cycle lanes in England, outside of London for the financial years from 2001–02 to 2004–05 is set out in the tables which have been placed in the Libraries of the House. Data on cycle lanes has only been collected since 2001–02.

The information is provided by local authorities on an annual basis as part of their annual performance report on their local transport plans. It is not verified by the Department. Responsibility for the accuracy of the data rests with individual authorities. The data are incomplete and includes some estimates.

A breakdown of cycle lanes by London borough is not available. TfL estimates that there are approximately 300 km of cycle lanes in London. In addition, there are 431 km of the planned London Cycle Network Plus ready for adoption by London boroughs, though it is not exclusively made up of cycle lanes.

Free Travel

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funding will be provided to local authorities to pay for the cost of free travel from 1 April 2006 for those aged 60 years and above; and if he will make a statement. [18505]

Ms Buck: The Government will provide an extra £350 million in 2006–07, which will be sufficient to fund the cost to local authorities.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which local authorities provide free *(a)* local and *(b)* national (i) bus and (ii) public transport passes to pensioners. [18710]

Ms Buck: In England, free off-peak travel on public transport is provided to those 60 and over (unless otherwise specified) and disabled people by the London boroughs, the West Midland's Passenger Transport Executive, Merseytravel, Crawley, Redditch (bus only), Thurrock (bus only), Reading (bus only, and 65 and over), Bournemouth (80 and over), Plymouth (80 and other), and Rossendale (90 and over). No English authorities provide national free travel.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how the term "local" will be defined when free local bus travel for pensioners is introduced in April 2006. [18711]

Ms Buck: Local will be defined as within the boundary of the district or unitary council, or the passenger transport executives in metropolitan areas.

Left-hand Drive Vehicles

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps the Government have taken to reduce the number of accidents involving left-hand drive commercial vehicles. [19321]

Dr. Ladyman: Vision to the right-hand side of large left-hand drive vehicles may be restricted. To help address this we have agreed, with European colleagues, a Directive requiring newly registered large goods vehicles to be fitted with additional mirrors. These mirrors will provide better vision along the side of the vehicle and also a better downward view of the traffic adjacent to the side of the vehicle. This Directive will start to take effect from January 2007.

Management Consultants

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which five management consultancies received the highest value of contracts awarded by his Department in each of the last three years; and what the total value was of the contracts awarded to each. [12587]

Ms Buck *[pursuant to my reply, 22 September 2005, Official Report, c. 2856–7W]:* A revised table for the 2002–03 financial year is shown as follows:

Supplier	*Value of contracts (£)*
Hyder	13,472,801
Salomon Brothers Int. Ltd.	12,842,062
Atkins	12,575,706
Mott MacDonald	11,128,019
Parsons Brinkerhoff	8,916,802

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's total spending on management consultants has been in each of the last three years. [13134]

Ms Buck *[pursuant to my reply, 11 August 2005, Official Report, c. 2396W]:* The revised figure for external consultants and advisers by the Department in the 2002–03 financial year is £227.5 million. A coding error led to a sum £65 million being erroneously included in my previous answer on this subject. The Department has now adjusted its systems to prevent this from happening again.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list management consultants employed by his Department in each of the last three years. [14238]

Ms Buck *[pursuant to my reply, 18 August 2005, Official Report, c. 2852W]:* A revised table has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Motorways (Camera Surveillance)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many cameras are *(a)* in place and *(b)* planned for (i) the M42 motorway, (ii) other motorways in, near or around Birmingham and (iii) other motorways elsewhere in England and Wales; and what the total expected cost is in each case. [15043]

Dr. Ladyman: At the present time, there are 1,103 fixed cameras on the motorway network for operational management of traffic flow and incidents such as accidents, traffic and adverse weather conditions. These cameras have been deployed on the network over a 30 year period and it is therefore not possible to provide detailed cost information. Cameras on the motorway in Wales are the responsibility of the Welsh Assembly.

Operational cameras on the network are used for traffic and incident management purposes such as comprehensive surveillance of accidents, traffic and weather conditions. They do not measure vehicle speed. The provision of surveillance cameras is controlled by Departmental Standards and they can only be used for the purposes described.

On the M42 Junction 3a to Junction 7, cameras have been installed as part of the Active Traffic Management (ATM) pilot scheme designed to manage flows of traffic in the West Midlands. The ATM project includes the provision of 211 fixed operational cameras at a total cost of £1.25 million, together with eight fixed enforcement cameras at a total cost of £0.360 million. A further eight fixed operational cameras are planned on the ATM project by December 2006, at a total cost of £0.320 million.

Current locations of fixed operational cameras on the network are as follows:

75 per cent. on Orbital Motorways—Birmingham Box, M25, Manchester, Leeds and Dartford Crossing (comprehensive cover);

25 per cent. on the rest of the network.

On the M25 there are currently four enforcement cameras with a further eight planned later this year, following the completion of the M25 Junction 12 to Junction 15 widening scheme near Heathrow. Detailed cost information for the installed cameras is not available, but is estimated to be £0.180 million. There is a further enforcement camera in place on the M20 motorway in Kent although detailed cost information is not available.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total cost of providing temporary camera surveillance on stretches of motorway in England which were undergoing maintenance or repair work was over the last three years for which figures are available. [17682]

Dr. Ladyman: The total identifiable cost of providing temporary camera surveillance on these stretches of motorway over the last three years is about £6 million. This includes speed enforcement cameras and CCTV cameras to monitor traffic flows and incidents. The cost of some cameras may have been included in the main contract cost and it has not been possible to isolate those costs.

Ragwort Control Act

Mr. Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department has taken to ensure that the Highways Agency and National Rail comply with the Ragwort Control Act 2003 Code of Practice. [18701]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highway Agency issued guidance to its managing agents in June 2004, bringing to their attention the requirements of the Ragwort Control Act 2003 Code of Practice and reminding them of the need to control infestations of common ragwort especially where near to grazing land.

Network Rail is a private company and compliance with this code of practice is an operational matter for it alone. Network Rail's environmental policy includes ragwort control, and should the hon. Member have any particular concerns he should write directly to the company.

Rail Services

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the capacity of the Liverpool Street to Stansted rail line to cope with proposed additional runway capacity at Stansted airport. [17647]

Ms Buck: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I have given today (UIN 17487).

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received regarding the proposed reductions in train services between Bexhill-on-Sea and London Victoria. [18257]

Derek Twigg: The Department has received a number of representations from local organisations, Members of Parliament, local councils and members of the public since January 2004 on this issue. We have also received a petition from residents of the Bexhill area supporting the continuation of a direct service to Victoria. I also met the hon. Member for Bexhill and Battle to discuss the issues on 6 July 2005.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans Network Rail has to revisit its analysis of future capacity requirements for domestic train services at St. Pancras to take account of passenger growth. [18472]

Derek Twigg: The Department will shortly begin developing a train specification for a replacement Midland Main Line franchise. The current franchise is due to expire in 2008. Capacity issues at St. Pancras will be discussed with Network Rail as the specification is developed.

Road Safety Partnerships

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on his policy on ensuring the public accountability of road safety partnerships. [19306]

Dr. Ladyman: Safety camera partnerships are locally formed and are locally accountable to their partners' organisations, for example, local highway authorities and local police. Safety camera partnerships undertake or discharge some of the duties and/or powers of the partners. The public accountability of these partnerships is the same as it is for the partners.

The Department sets the rules and guidance for the safety camera programme and ensures that partnerships adhere to these to enable them to remain within the programme. The rules and guidance do not affect the public accountability of partnerships.

Stansted Airport Expansion

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans his Department have to improve *(a)* rail and *(b)* road connections to Stansted airport to take account of projected expansion of the airport's capacity. [17487]

Ms Buck: The Future of Air Transport White Paper supported development of a second runway at Stansted and the provision of associated surface transport to support this growth.

BAA, the airport operator, is taking work forward to prepare a planning application for a new runway at Stansted. As part of this, the Government are working with BAA to identify surface access solutions that support both expansion at the airport and wider growth across the region.

Transport Projects

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what request for Government financial support has been made by the proposers of *(a)* the Thames Gateway Bridge and *(b)* the second Mersey crossing. [18389]

Dr. Ladyman: Transport for London requested PFI credits of up to £200 million for the Thames Gateway Bridge. The Department has agreed to this, subject to obtaining the necessary statutory powers and approval of the final business case.

Halton borough council has submitted a major scheme business case for the New Mersey Gateway to secure Government funding of £64 million in conventional grant and £72 million in PFI credits.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Barristers (Strike Action)

22. **Mr. Gordon Prentice:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many barristers are on strike in respect of publicly funded work; and if she will make a statement. [18522]

Bridget Prentice: The outrageous and irresponsible action by members of the Bar is taking place in only two parts of the country. Barristers are self-employed and take individual decisions about their work, so we have no figures on the numbers involved.

29. **Mr. Gray:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what contingency plans she has put in place in the event of a strike by criminal barristers dealing with publicly funded work. [18529]

Bridget Prentice: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply I gave earlier to the hon. Member for the Forest of Dean (Mr. Harper).

Voter Registration

23. **Jon Trickett:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will bring forward legislation to introduce a statutory duty on electoral registration officers to maximise voter registration. [18523]

Ms Harman: The Electoral Administration Bill, introduced on 11 October, includes a new duty on registration officers to take all necessary steps to ensure comprehensive registers. Those steps include the following specific measures:

(a) Sending the canvass form more than once to any address;

(b) Making house to house inquiries on more than one occasion;

(c) Making contact by such other means as the ERO thinks appropriate with persons who do not have an entry in a register;

(d) Inspecting any records held by any person which the registration officer is permitted to inspect; and

(e) Providing training to others carrying out the duty.

26. **Dr. Whitehead:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what measures her Department is taking to encourage the registration of electors. [18526]

Ms Harman: Electoral registration is one of our key priorities. The Electoral Administration Bill will allow people to register after an election has been called, will place a new duty on registration officers to ensure comprehensive registers, and will enable returning officers to promote participation at elections and at the annual canvass.

30. **Mr. Mahmood:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps she plans to take to increase voter registration in inner-city areas. [18530]

Ms Harriet Harman: We are committed to tackling the problem of under-registration, particularly in inner city areas. Besides the registration measures in the Electoral Administration Bill, we are looking at ways to simplify the registration form and also intend to initiate a campaign, with the Electoral Commission and others, to increase registration in London which has the lowest levels of registration in the UK ahead of next May's local elections.

Postal Voting

24. **Kitty Ussher:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will seek to make it an offence to make a false application for a postal vote. [18524]

Ms Harman: The Electoral Administration Bill includes a provision to create a new electoral offence of falsely applying for a postal vote. A person found guilty of this offence will be liable to be sent to prison for up to two years, to receive a fine of up to £5,000, and to be barred from voting or standing as a candidate for five years.

27. **Richard Ottaway:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what her policy is on all postal vote elections. [18527]

Ms Harman: We have no plans to change S. 10 Representation of the People Act which allows applications of all postal votes pilot.

Legal Aid

25. **Mr. Jim Cunningham:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans the Department has to conduct a review of the legal aid process. [18525]

Bridget Prentice: My right hon. and noble Friend published a policy document 'A fairer deal for Legal Aid' on 5 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 5WS. We need a fairer deal for legal aid. Fair justice at a fairer price: fair to taxpayers, fair to the vulnerable, fair to defendants, and fair to practitioners.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when she last met the Chairman of the Bar Council to discuss barristers' concerns about changes in legal aid funding. [18956]

Bridget Prentice: The Lord Chancellor and I meet regularly with representatives of the Bar Council and its chairman to discuss a number of subjects, including changes in legal aid funding.

Freedom of Information Act

28. **Norman Baker:** To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent assessment she has made of the adherence to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 by Government Departments. [18528]

Ms Harman: My Department publishes data on the adherence of central Government to FOI on a quarterly basis, data for the second quarter covering April to June of this year was published on 30 September and can be found in the Libraries of both Houses and on my Department's website.

Asylum Seekers

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the adequacy of provision of *(a)* legal advice and assistance and *(b)* interpretation facilities for asylum seekers in preparing their cases for asylum. [19035]

Bridget Prentice: *(a)* The Legal Services Commission (LSC) continually monitors supply of publicly funded immigration and asylum legal services to ensure that supply is sufficient to meet demand across the country.

Asylum numbers have fallen significantly in recent years. Home Office figures show that the monthly application rate has fallen by almost two thirds since 2001, and a further reduction is likely. It is necessary to bear this in mind when considering issues relating to the supply of firms and organisations undertaking publicly funded asylum and immigration advice.

The LSC is confident that there are currently few gaps in supply. However, where there have been gaps, the LSC have and will continue to take measures to address them.

(b) The services of interpreters form an essential role in facilitating the provision of advice by legal representatives in immigration and asylum cases. The General Civil Contract therefore provides that suppliers may claim for the cost of using an interpreter wherever necessary.

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the adequacy of provision of publicly funded advice for asylum seekers in Sheffield. [19036]

Bridget Prentice: There are currently two specialist providers of immigration and asylum services in Sheffield funded by the Legal Services Commission (LSC)—Sheffield Law Centre and Howells solicitors.

Having assessed the provision of publicly funded advice in Sheffield, the LSC is aware that, because of the withdrawal of other contract holders from immigration work across south Yorkshire as a whole, there is some unmet need for immigration advice in the area.

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of whether adequate legal advice is available in the places in which asylum seekers are located and to which they are dispersed. [19040]

Bridget Prentice: When a client is re-located by the Home Office, or if they choose to move to another location, they are entitled to instruct a more local representative using public funding. Although the same thresholds will apply, there is flexibility within the system to allow a new representative to pursue the case. New representatives can:

carry out any urgent work required regardless of the costs incurred by the previous representative;

apply to the LSC for a new threshold where they are unable to obtain relevant information from the previous representative;

apply to extend a threshold where the case has merit and further work is required; and

claim an extra 30 minutes work for an initial interview with a dispersed client

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when the Secretary of State will reply to the letter dated 6 September from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mrs. Avamhin Mushtag. [19514]

Bridget Prentice: The Secretary of State and Lord Chancellor wrote to the hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton on 29 September in response to his letter of 6 September. I apologise that the hon. Member does not appear to have received the letter of 29 September. A further copy has been forwarded to the hon. Member.

Criminal Legal Aid

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs by how much expenditure on criminal legal aid has changed over the last 10 years. [19058]

Bridget Prentice: Expenditure on criminal legal aid rose from £616 million in 1995–96 to £1,192 million in 2004–05, an increase of 94 per cent.

Immigration Tribunal

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when she last visited an immigration tribunal. [18955]

Bridget Prentice: My most recent visit to an immigration tribunal was to Harmondsworth and Hatton Cross Hearing Centres on 23 June 2005. I hope to visit Loughborough Asylum and Immigration Tribunal in the near future.

Judicial Appointments

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many people have been appointed to the senior Bar in Northern Ireland in each year since 1997; and what the perceived community background was of the appointees in each year. [18895]

Bridget Prentice: There have been 25 persons appointed Queen's counsel in Northern Ireland since 1997 as follows:

1999—12 appointments were made.

2001—13 appointments were made.

Candidates were not required to complete equity monitoring forms and therefore no information on their perceived community background is available.

Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what is the perceived religious affiliation based on educational background of the members of the Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission. [19310]

Bridget Prentice: The Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission is made up of eight men and five women, six of whom are regarded as Protestant, six as Catholic, and one as neither.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Africa

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department plans to take to ensure adequate funding for the treatment and prevention of parasitic diseases, with particular reference to *(a)* onchocerciasis and *(b)* trachoma following the Commission for Africa Report. [17251]

Hilary Benn: DFID is involved with a number of Global Health Partnerships for parasitic diseases identified in the Commission for Africa Report, such as lymphatic filariasis, (commonly known as elephantiasis) and onchocerciasis (river blindness). DFID does not support a specific trachoma initiative.

We currently support the African Programme for Onchocerciasis Control. DFID has supported onchocerciasis control continuously from 1974 and we have contributed about £4.65 million to date. Subject to a satisfactory progress, we plan to continue our support to the African Programme for Onchocerciasis Control.

DFID has also recently signed a five year contract of £2.5 million with the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis. DFID's total contribution to date is now £5.9 million. DFID is working closely with the Global Alliance to encourage the integration of the many programmes designed to tackle individual parasitic diseases. This will provide a more cohesive approach to controlling these diseases at community, regional, national and international levels—including making the most of national health and international development funding.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if his Department will make funding available for projects that send salvaged furniture to schools in Africa. [18438]

Hilary Benn: Whenever possible, the Department for International Development (DFID) provides aid to African countries in support of their own plans and through the country's own systems. This engenders country ownership of development activities and helps to build sustainable local capacity to continue delivering services in the long term.

However, there are circumstances when more specific projects are appropriate, and DFID considers such applications on a case by case basis. Applications should be made to the Civil Society Challenge Fund, which is DFID's main central channel of support for UK based civil society organisations' programmes.

Departmental Finance

Helen Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the latest estimate is of underspend by his Department *(a)* in cash terms and *(b)* as a percentage of departmental budget for financial year 2004–05. [18462]

Hilary Benn: The information requested is contained in the Public Expenditure Outturn White Paper (PEOWP) 2004–05 (Cm 6639).

Disaster Relief

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what *(a)* financial aid and *(b)* logistical support the United Kingdom made available in response to (i) the tsunami in December 2004, (ii) hurricane Katrina in the United States in September, (iii) displaced people in Darfur during 2005 and (iv) the earthquake in India, Kashmir and Pakistan in October. [18274]

Hilary Benn: In response to the Indian Ocean disaster in December 2004, DFID has to date committed a total of £66,201,096 which includes assistance other than logistical support. Of this figure, £16,827,833 was programmed as support to logistics.

In response to hurricane Katrina, DFID sent 2,900 blankets, which were transported free of charge by a Beluga aircraft donated by Airbus International. The value of this support is about £10,000. DFID also seconded an expert to help co-ordinate donations by other EU countries. Separately, the Ministry of Defence delivered around 482,000 Operational Ration Packs.

DFID has provided £27 million of humanitarian assistance to the UN and non-governmental organisations in Darfur in 2005. While a portion of these funds are being used by agencies to support their logistical operations, it not possible to say with any accuracy at this stage how much is being spent specifically on logistics. In addition, this year we have provided £19 million to the Africa Union, which is supporting the protection of displaced people in Darfur. These funds are being used to airlift troops into Darfur, purchase equipment (including 450 vehicles), and the provision of military and logistics advice and training.

In response to the earthquake in India, Kashmir and Pakistan, DFID has so far committed £13 million of support, of which £455,000 has already been committed to providing vehicles to support the UN's relief effort, and DFID has also committed £137,500 to underwrite the costs of two helicopters (including airlift) for the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. DFID is currently looking at options for providing more helicopters.

Gabon

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance his Department is providing to Gabon in 2005–06; and if he will make a statement. [17078]

Hilary Benn: DFID has no bilateral development programme with Gabon. UK assistance is provided through multilateral channels such as the European Commission, UN agencies and the World Bank. The

UK's share of multilateral support to Gabon was approximately £2,000,000 in each year of 2002 and 2003.

Illegal Bushmeat Trade

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what assessment he has made of the effects on the Central African rainforests of the illegal taking of bushmeat; [17339]

(2) what steps his Department is taking to encourage a reduction in demand for bushmeat in Africa; [17340]

(3) what assessment has been made of the environmental impact of the bushmeat trade in Africa. [17341]

Hilary Benn: The DFID Wildlife and Poverty Study estimated that 150 million poor people are significantly dependent on wildlife for their food and livelihoods. Bushmeat is an important part of this. The study drew out implications for donors, governments, the private sector and civil society. We disseminated the findings of the study widely. DFID has not carried out a specific assessment of the effects of the bushmeat trade on the central African rainforests.

The Government have set up an Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Biodiversity to address global biodiversity loss, including the unsustainable and illegal trade in bushmeat.

Efforts were made some years ago to reduce demand for bushmeat by promoting the farming of wild species such as the grass cutter, which are regularly hunted. However, this was technically difficult and proved unpopular with farmers and hunters.

An environmental impact assessment of the bushmeat trade in Africa has not been carried out, although research commissioned by the Government has helped to understand better the harvesting of bushmeat in relation to global biodiversity loss. Officials are now assessing further research needs based on the conclusions of DEFRA's research project, 'Solution-oriented research needed to promote a more sustainable Bushmeat Trade in Central and West Africa'.

Indonesia/Sri Lanka

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much has been paid to the UK Government in official debt service by *(a)* Indonesia and *(b)* Sri Lanka in 2005; what the estimated payments obligation for (i) the remainder of 2005 and (ii) 2006 is; and how much relief has been given in each case. [16931]

Mr. Thomas: Following the December 2004 tsunami, the Paris Club of official (Government) creditors agreed a one year moratorium on payments on eligible loans held by Indonesia and Sri Lanka for 2005, to free up funds for post-tsunami reconstruction.

The UK has no outstanding Paris Club debt from Sri Lanka, and therefore no debt covered by the moratorium. Paris Club debt owed to the UK by Indonesia has been included in the moratorium, with all payments due in 2005 deferred and rescheduled for payment over the following four years. The total amount due to the UK in 2005 was approximately £73 million; all of which has been deferred. Approximately £93 million will become due for payment in 2006.

In addition to these Paris Club debts, there are small amounts of debt outstanding to the UK in the form of old CDC (formerly known as the Commonwealth Development Corporation) loans to Indonesia and credits made through the EU and World Bank to Indonesia and Sri Lanka. The CDC loans have been treated in the same way as the Paris Club loans as far as possible, while the credits made through the EU have only recently reverted to bilateral status and will also be treated in accordance with UK bilateral debt relief policies as soon as possible. This process is already under way, in co-ordination with the other EU donors and the World Bank. Payments on these loans made in 2005 and currently scheduled to fall due in 2006 are summarised in the following table:

£ million

	Indonesia	*Sri Lanka*
Payments received to date in 2005	0.02	0.02
Remaining payments due in calendar year 2005	0.01	0.02
Payments due in calendar year 2006	1.96	0.04

Seaports (Gaza)

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what financial assistance the UK is giving to seaports in Gaza. [17439]

Hilary Benn: The UK expressed support at the Gleneagles summit for James Wolfensohn, Quartet Special Envoy for Disengagement, to stimulate a global financial contribution of up to $3 billion per year over the coming three years. This funding will come from both public and private sources and will assist Palestinian economic regeneration following Israeli disengagement from Gaza and parts of the northern West Bank.

Mr. Wolfensohn is working closely with the World Bank in supporting the Palestinian Authority to prepare a Medium Term Development Plan for presentation to donors in December 2005. This plan will reflect the six priority areas for joint working between Israelis and Palestinians already identified by Mr. Wolfensohn. These priorities include the construction of an airport and seaport for Gaza as part of the essential easing of current restrictions on the movement of goods and people.

The UK Government are working closely with Mr. Wolfensohn and the Palestinian Authority to help ensure that our assistance is in line with the Medium Term Development Plan, its priorities and timescales. The current expectation is that most of our funding will be delivered in 2006 and beyond.

St. Helena

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what actions his Department took to ensure it got best value in the awarding of contracts for improving tourism in St. Helena. [17732]

Hilary Benn: DFID awarded one contract focused on tourism development in St. Helena. This was worth £65,000. The contract was awarded after competition, against clear evaluation criteria related to quality of methodology, relevant previous experience, and commercial factors.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his Department's policy is regarding the involvement of companies in consultancy as well as receiving public funding for tourism projects on the island of St. Helena. [17733]

Mr. Thomas: We have no plans to engage any companies for consultancy work on St. Helena, if at the same time as providing them with funding for tourism projects.

Street Children (Central America)

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on actions his Department is taking to protect street children in central America from human rights abuses. [17248]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has provided US$150,000 through the Inter American Development Bank to build the capacity of non-governmental organisations in Guatemala to strengthen the human rights of street children. DFID supports the Save the Children Fund (SCF) through a global agreement for its work worldwide, including the SCF office and youth justice initiatives in Honduras. In Nicaragua, DFID supported the work of Casa Alianza until February 2005.

Swaziland

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the impact of common agricultural policy subsidy reductions on sugar cane on the sugar cane industry of Swaziland. [17938]

Hilary Benn: Sugar accounted for about 7.5 per cent. of Swaziland's exports in 2003, about a third of which went to the European Union (EU). Changes to the EU regime, with exports to the EU at a lower price, could lead to a reduction in export earnings since the EU offers a higher price for Swaziland's sugar than other markets.

Recent research indicates, however, that if Swaziland implements planned reforms of its sugar industry and secures unlimited access to the EU market through the proposed Southern African Development Community (SADC) Economic Partnership Agreement, then there should be positive impact on production levels, export earnings and employment. This is in contrast to the possible negative impact in most other African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries (ACP) Sugar Protocol countries. If Swaziland does not secure unlimited access then industry revenue and export earnings would fall from present levels.

Uganda

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to further capacity-building in democratic institutions in Uganda. [17844]

Hilary Benn: The UK is providing support with others for the political transition in Uganda to help create an environment in which free and fair multiparty elections can take place in 2006. This support includes capacity building assistance for key democratic institutions such as the Uganda Electoral Commission, all the main political parties and the media. We are also supporting a National Civic Education Programme to promote citizens' participation in the political process. We have a long-term programme of support to the Parliament of Uganda. In total, UK financial support for democratic institutions and the election process in Uganda is expected to be £850,000 this financial year. In addition our work to improve transparency in Government and to assist civil society in holding Government to account also supports the general trend towards democracy.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what conditions he has set for the resumption of the aid to Uganda which was withheld in April 2004 because of the slow pace of democratisation; and if he will make a statement. [17845]

Hilary Benn: The UK has a Poverty Reduction Budget Support (PRBS) arrangement in Uganda to support the implementation of the Government's Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP). This links assistance to the reforms set out in the PEAP including macro-economic management and governance. In 2004–05, £5 million out of the total PRBS provision of £40 million (and a total Uganda programme of £65 million) was not disbursed because of concerns about the progress of Uganda's political transition leading up to the multiparty elections that will take place early in 2006. A decision on our PRBS commitment of £50 million for 2005–06 will be made after an assessment of economic, financial management and sectoral performance criteria that have been jointly agreed between the Government of Uganda and budget support donors, and after a further review of the political transition also using agreed criteria. The decision will be guided by the UK Government's new policy paper on conditionality.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to reduce HIV prevalence in internally displaced persons camps in northern and eastern Uganda; and if he will make a statement. [17849]

Hilary Benn: In northern Uganda, which is the area most affected by the conflict and internal displacement, HIV prevalence, as measured at antenatal screening, is between 10 per cent. and 12 per cent. While this figure represents a decline from 26 per cent. in 1993, it is much higher than the national rate of 6.1 per cent.

DFID is committed to reducing the spread of HIV in Uganda. Since 2002 we have spent over £5 million on an HIV/AIDS project which is supporting the work of the Uganda AIDS Commission and civil society organisations who are providing voluntary counselling, testing and treatment and establishing networks of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Our Poverty Reduction Budget Support helps the Government's own response to the pandemic. We are working closely with the Government, the UN and

other development partners to ensure HIV/AIDS programmes are effectively co-ordinated. The HIV/AIDS programmes of a number of the organisations with which we are working have a special focus on the problem in camps for internally displaced people in northern and eastern Uganda. In addition we are working with UN agencies to reduce the vulnerability of children and women to sexual violence and exploitation in the camps.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Burma

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will propose to the United Nations Security Council that it take action to address the situation in Burma. [18613]

Ian Pearson: We support any action in the UN Security Council which would help to promote reform and positive change in Burma.

The UK remains deeply concerned about the political and human rights situation in Burma. The UK has been at the forefront of efforts over many years to bring pressure to bear on the military regime to reform and respect human rights. We regularly raise our concerns on human rights in Burma with the military regime, most recently on 22 August when our ambassador in Rangoon and other EU ambassadors had a meeting with the Burmese Foreign Minister, Nyan Win.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the *(a)* human rights and *(b)* political situation in Burma. [18774]

Ian Pearson: We remain deeply concerned by the situation in Burma. Serious abuses of human rights continue, particularly in areas where there is still armed conflict. The humanitarian situation is grave. Only a genuinely inclusive process of national reconciliation can solve Burma's many problems.

The EU Troika, including the United Kingdom, expressed concern over the situation in Burma to the Burmese Foreign Minister, Nyan Win, in Kyoto on 6 May as did our ambassador in Rangoon, and other EU ambassadors, on 22 August. We continue to believe that it is essential for the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) to enter into a genuine constructive dialogue with all legitimate representative bodies including Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy, and the ethnic groups to promote a peaceful, lasting and democratic outcome.

Human rights violations have been highlighted by successive highly critical UK co-sponsored UN resolutions on Burma, most recently at the UN Commission on Human Rights in April. These issues remain a focus for the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Burma, Professor Sergio Pinheiro, and the UN Secretary-General's special envoy to Burma, Tan Sri Razali Ismail, whom we urge the SPDC to allow to return to Burma.

Cyprus

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has discussed with the Turkish Government Turkey's position on recognition of Cyprus. [17438]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I refer my hon. Friend to the observations on this issue made by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary during his statement on Croatia and Turkey on 11 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 157–59.

EU Sugar Regime

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made to date with sugar reform under the UK presidency of the EU. [17571]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: As presidency, the UK is aiming to reach agreement on reforms to the EU sugar regime at the November Agriculture and Fisheries Council. Examination of the reform proposals in the council is under way. We have already held discussions on these matters in a series of working groups and in the margins of the September Agriculture Council. By the end of October, the UK presidency and the Commission will have also held trilateral meetings with every other member state. The Commission has said that it believes early agreement is essential in order to provide a sustainable framework for the industry itself, to help the EU comply with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Appellate Body ruling against the current regime and to send a strong positive signal ahead of the WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong in December. We support that analysis. We are also seeking agreement on good, timely transitional assistance arrangements for African, Caribbean and Pacific countries affected by the reforms to help them adjust.

European Commission

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list proposals from the European Commission put into effect since 1 June that have Articles *(a)* 94, *(b)* 95 and *(c)* 308 as their base; which of these have been challenged by the Government on the grounds of legal treaty basis; and if he will make a statement. [16712]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: In general, the legal basis of Community legislation is determined on the basis of objective factors that are amenable to judicial review, in particular with regard to the aim and content of the measure. The Government are committed to ensuring that the correct legal base is used in European legislation. There may be occasions when the Government disagree with the Commission and other member states over the use of a particular legal base. In these circumstances a number of options remain open to the Government, including either to vote against or abstain from supporting the proposal. We also have the option of recording our disagreement with the legal base in a minutes statement.

Two pieces of legislation falling directly within the departmental responsibilities of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office fall under the category the hon. Member set out. A Council Regulation imposing certain

restrictive measures directed against persons acting in violation of the arms embargo with regard to the Democratic Republic of the Congo was adopted at the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 18 July. This used Article 308 as one of three legal bases. A Council Regulation imposing specific restrictive measures directed against certain persons impeding the peace process and breaking international law in the conflict in the Darfur region in Sudan was adopted at the same Council. This also used Article 308 as one of three legal bases. The Government did not challenge the legal base of these regulations. In so far as the question relates to the business of other Government Departments, it would be most appropriately be directed to their Secretaries of State.

Iran

Mark Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether it was ever his policy to supply military equipment to Iran. [18764]

Dr. Howells: The established policy of the EU is not to supply arms to Iran. We assess export licence applications on a case-by-case basis against the consolidated EU and national arms export licensing criteria and other policies taking into account the prevailing circumstances at the time. We will not issue an export licence if approval would be inconsistent with national embargoes observed by the UK. I refer my hon. Friend to the parliamentary statements made by Douglas Hurd, the then Foreign Secretary, on 1 March 1993 and my hon. Friend Tony Lloyd, the then Minister of State, on 28 September 1998, which set out our approach in respect of Iran. We will not issue licences for the export to Iran of goods or technology on the military or nuclear list, except for goods essential for the safety of civil aircraft and air traffic control systems and certain radioactive substances for medical use. No licences will be approved for any equipment where there is knowledge or reason to suspect that it will go to a military end-user or be used for military purposes. On very rare occasions, and with parliamentary agreement, exceptions are made where denying an export or gift would be against the spirit of the embargo. For example, we did so earlier this year with a small donation of body armour for the anti-narcotics police, who work closely with the UK and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to prevent drugs trafficking.

Israel

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the introduction of the Civil Wrongs/Torts (Liability of the State) Law and the Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law by the Israeli Government; and what assessment he has made of how this will impact on Palestinians. [18122]

Dr. Howells: Neither the Civil Wrongs/Torts Law nor the Nationality and Entry into Israel Law is a new law, although both have been amended in recent months.

In July the Knesset approved an amendment to the Civil Wrongs Law which prevents any Palestinian injured by, or suffering any damage from, Israeli military forces from claiming compensation if the Ministry of Defence declare that the incident occurred in a military zone. We are concerned by any legislation which limits Palestinian people's recourse to Israeli courts. We are also concerned about the effect of this law on the accountability of the Israeli military forces.

Also in July, the Knesset passed an amendment to the Nationality and Entry into Israel Law, allowing Palestinian men over the age of 35 and women over 25 to apply for immigration in the framework of family re-unification. While the July amendment indicates a slight relaxation of the law, we remain concerned about this law and its effects. We have raised these concerns with the Israeli Government on a number of occasions.

We will continue to monitor these laws and their implementation.

Rwanda

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the decision of Rwanda to grant asylum to General Laurent Nkunda. [18450]

Ian Pearson: We understand that Rwanda has not granted asylum to Laurent Nkunda. Our information is that he has been dismissed from the Congolese army but remains in North Kivu province, in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). We have encouraged the DRC authorities, in conjunction with the UN peacekeeping force, to apprehend Nkunda as soon as possible in connection with atrocities committed by units under his command in Bukavu in June 2004 and subsequently. The Congolese authorities are in the process of issuing an international arrest warrant for Nkunda so that he can be arrested if he surfaces outside the DRC.

Sri Lanka

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Sri Lanka on its proposals on the conversion of Buddhists to other religions; and if he will make a statement. [19090]

Dr. Howells: I have not had any recent discussions with the Government of Sri Lanka on this subject. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is closely monitoring the introduction of legislation seeking to prevent "unethical conversions". Both the Government of Sri Lanka and the National Heritage Party (JHU) have published such legislation. However, the Government legislation has not been formally tabled in Parliament and the JHU legislation has made limited progress through the legislative process. On 4 October, the JHU called for the second reading of a separate Bill to amend the constitution by declaring Buddhism the state religion, but this debate was not heard.

The British high commission in Sri Lanka maintains a regular dialogue on this subject with political leaders, religious groups and other diplomatic missions. Our view is that legislation in this area is inappropriate and that inter-community and inter-religious dialogue is the most constructive way to promote tolerance and co-operation. The British high commissioner in Colombo raised the issue when he met the Sri Lankan Prime Minister, Mahinda Rajapakse, on 20 September.

Sudan

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the UK Government have made to the Government of Sudan in response to reports by the African Union that *(a)* Sudanese Government security forces have attacked refugee camps near compounds that house AU troops in the Tawilla district of Darfur and *(b)* attacks have included Government helicopter gunships. [17481]

Ian Pearson: We await the results of the African Union's (AU) investigation into these incidents. The UK has issued EU Presidency statements condemning recent incidents in Darfur. My noble Friend the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for Africa (Lord Triesman) visited the Sudan from 5 to 8 October and raised the security situation in Sudan with the Government of Sudan.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made with deploying to Darfur the military personnel and civilian personnel authorised by the African Union Peace and Security Council on 28 April; whether he expects the African Union to meet its target deployment force by spring 2006; and what support is being provided by the United Nations Mission in Sudan to the African Union. [17490]

Ian Pearson: The African Union (AU) have deployed a total of 5,581 military and civilian personnel and 908 civilian police as part of the AU Mission in Sudan's (AMIS) current expansion to over 7,700 personnel. Under current planning, the AU expect to deploy this full force size by the end of October, although this date may be delayed due to other commitments in troop contributing countries, especially for civilian police.

The United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) liaises closely with AMIS, through the AU Commission Chairperson's Special Representative in Sudan, meetings with the AU in Addis Ababa, through its constant presence and increasing joint activities on the ground in Darfur such as training in policing and operational planning. UNMIS has a liaison staff permanently deployed to the AMIS Headquarters in El Fasher to ensure this support is closely co-ordinated. Additionally, the UN Assistance Cell to the AU, based in Addis Ababa, helps support the AU in planning and providing technical advice for AMIS and works closely with other partners to facilitate the AU Commission's efforts to secure required resources and other support needs for AMIS.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made in deploying the United Nations peace support mission to Sudan. [17491]

Ian Pearson: Deployment of the UN peace support mission to Sudan (UNMIS) is continuing, with 2,742 military personnel deployed on 5 October, with a further 475 expected to arrive by 12 October. Deployment has been slower than expected due to the rainy season and delays from troop contributing countries. The UN currently expects full deployment of the mandated 10,000 military personnel and up to 715 civilian police by the end of November.

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Arab Union on the situation in Sudan. [17718]

Ian Pearson: We hold regular discussions with the African Union (AU) at all levels. Our embassies in Addis Ababa and Khartoum hold regular meetings with the AU, and we have UK observers at the current AU-led Abuja peace talks. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn) and my noble Friend the Minister for Africa (Lord Triesman) discussed Sudan with AU Chairperson Konare during their visit to the AU summit in July. They also held discussions with AU representatives during their visits to Sudan in June and October respectively.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of Sudan on whether it is adhering to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. [18121]

Ian Pearson: We regularly raise with the Government of Sudan the need to respect human rights and abide by international human rights treaties such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. We hold these discussions both bilaterally and through multilateral forums such as the EU-Sudan Human Rights dialogue.

We continue to stress to the Government of Sudan the importance of fully implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the new Interim National Constitution, which make explicit provisions for the protection of human rights. My noble Friend the Minister for Africa (Lord Triesman) did so most recently during his visit to Sudan 5–8 October.

Swaziland

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the representations he has received on the withdrawal of the high commission in Swaziland. [17942]

Ian Pearson: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has had one letter from a noble Lord about the closure of the British high commission in Mbabane, Swaziland. We are now represented in Swaziland by an honorary consul in Mbabane. Our high commissioner in Pretoria, right hon. Paul Boateng, will be accredited as non-resident high commissioner to Swaziland.

Uganda

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his policy is on the constitutional amendment presented to the Ugandan Parliament that would enable President Museveni to rule for life; and if he will make a statement. [17843]

Ian Pearson: The Ugandan Parliament voted on the third reading of the Constitutional Amendment Bill on 18 August. The vote was 222 in favour, 37 against and 2 abstentions. The Bill then received presidential assent on 26 September and is now in force. The Bill included

a number of proposals, one of which was to lift the limit of two five year terms for any one President. The issue of lifting the limit on presidential tenure, like other proposed changes to the constitution, was for Ugandans to decide. Our concern was that any changes to the constitution should be made constitutionally and democratically and should carry the confidence of the Ugandan people.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of *(a)* recent military spending by Uganda and *(b)* the purposes for which the weaponry acquired is to be used; and if he will make a statement. [17848]

Ian Pearson: We and other donors endorsed the Ugandan Government's 2004–05 budget on the basis that allocations for defence were acceptable and affordable in the context of Uganda's development. The current defence budget is just over 2 per cent. of GDP (UGS. 347 billion (US$ 198 million)) and is in line with the Government of Uganda's expenditure in other sectors.

The Government of Uganda established the Joint Defence Sector Working Group, where donor countries work with the Ugandan Government to discuss implementation of the UK-funded Defence Review, completed at the beginning of 2004. In addition, the Government periodically holds confidential discussions with the Ugandan Government on the classified elements of the defence budget.

These two mechanisms help ensure that the defence budget is used in line with the recommendations of the 2004 Defence Review.

United States (Deportation)

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many individuals have been deported or otherwise involuntarily transferred from the United States to *(a)* Middle Eastern and *(b)* Central Asian countries on flights which have landed in the United Kingdom in each of the last four years. [16674]

Ian Pearson: The Government are not aware of the use of their territory or airspace for the purposes of 'extraordinary rendition'. The Government have not received any requests, nor granted any permissions, for the use of UK territory or airspace for such purposes.

The Government's policy is not to deport or extradite any person to another state where there are substantial grounds to believe that the person will be subject to torture or where there is a real risk that the death penalty will be applied.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Animal Testing (Cosmetics)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will bring forward legislation to ban the marketing of imported cosmetics which have involved testing on live animals. [17453]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Cosmetics (Safety) Regulations 2004 implemented into UK law the 7th Amendment to the Cosmetics Directive on animal testing as follows:

a ban on 'the testing of finished cosmetic products' on animals in any member state from 11 March 2005;

a ban on 'testing ingredients or combinations of ingredients' on animals within member states as soon as an alternative method has been published by the EC and, in any case, alternative tests must be developed six years after entry into force of the directive i.e. 11 March 2009 or earlier if a validated alternative test is available. In relation to three tests concerning repeat-dose toxicity, reproductive toxicity and toxikinetics, for which no alternatives are yet under consideration, the deadline will be 10 years after entry into force of the directive, 11 March 2013;

a total ban on the 'marketing of finished cosmetic products' which have been tested on animals, and a total ban on the 'marketing of cosmetic products the ingredients or combinations of ingredients' of which have been tested on animals, which will operate in the same way as the ingredient test ban described above. The marketing ban will apply no matter where in the world the cosmetics products originate.

Beer Measures

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent discussions he has had with the pub industry about the serving of full pints of beer; and if he will make a statement. [17892]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* I had a useful meeting with representatives of CAMRA, the British Beer and Pub Association and the Local Authority Co-ordinating Body on Regulatory services (LACORS) about a year ago.

It did not appear that there is a consensus on how to make progress on this issue, but we are continuing to consider the results of our consultations. We are at present in the course of revising the legislation dealing generally with weights and measures for food, and are aiming to publish a new Consolidated Food Order for consultation in the new year and this will take account of our conclusions on this issue.

Company Statistics

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether he collects information about the *(a)* annual turnover, *(b)* annual profit, *(c)* number of staff employed by, *(d)* rates of growth of turnover, profit or staffing and *(e)* eligibility for Government grant of businesses which (i) are and (ii) are not registered for VAT. [16547]

Barry Gardiner: The Office for National Statistics (ONS) maintains a business register that contains turnover and number of staff employed for all businesses that are registered for VAT/PAYE. ONS also collects information from a sample of businesses in the Annual Business Inquiry such as turnover, employment and purchases that allows calculation of gross values added, net capital expenditure and average employment.

The Department purchases some of these data, where necessary to help advise Government policy. The Small Business Service runs a separate survey, the Annual Small Business Survey. This collects annual turnover, number of staff employed by, number of staff employed 12 months previously, and expected future employment

and turnover. This survey covers a sample of businesses which is not limited to businesses registered for VAT and/or PAYE.

Eligibility for Government grants is subject to EU state aids rules and depends also on the criteria for each individual Government grant programme or scheme. Government grants to businesses are delivered nationally, regionally and locally and the Department does not keep a central record of how many businesses are eligible for each different available grant.

Correspondence

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 10 October 2005, ref 16862, if he will give a detailed breakdown of the responses he has received in terms of *(a)* letters, *(b)* emails, *(c)* postcards and *(d)* other from (i) members of the public, (ii) pressure groups, (iii) companies and (iv) others. [18756]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department currently handles around 50,000 letters a year and approximately 200,000 emails on a wide range of issues. Further breakdown in the form requested is not available.

EU Competition Law

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the responsibilities of *(a)* Ofcom and *(b)* the Office of Fair Trading in implementing EU competition law (i) before and (ii) after 1 May. [19419]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Before 1 May 2004, Ofcom had no powers to implement EU competition law while the Office of Fair Trading had certain limited powers to assist the European Commission in carrying out its functions in applying EU competition law.

On 1 May 2004, the Competition Act 1998 and Other Enactments (Amendment) Regulations 2004/1261 entered into force. These Regulations designated both Ofcom and the Office of Fair Trading as National Competition Authorities pursuant to Article 35 of European Commission Regulation 1/2003 and made a number of amendments to the Competition Act 1998 giving both bodies the power directly to apply EU competition law in addition to UK competition law.

Kyoto Protocol (Border Taxes)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the merits of using border taxes on countries that have failed to ratify the Kyoto protocol to compensate British firms who incur transitional costs of reducing greenhouse gas emissions under the terms of the Kyoto protocol; and if he will make a statement. [17143]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

The Government have no plans to introduce border taxes.

National Minimum Wage

Edward Miliband: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people in Doncaster, North constituency have received the national minimum wage since its introduction. [15065]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Reliable figures cannot be produced for the Doncaster, North constituency due to small sample size.

The DTI estimates that around 130,000 people in the Yorkshire and Humber area stood to benefit from the introduction of the national minimum wage in October 1999.

The DTI has estimated that around 140,000 people in the Yorkshire and Humber area would be covered by the October 2005 up-rating of the national minimum wage. The DTI has based the October 1999 estimate on the Office for National Statistics central estimate of low pay; the 2005 estimate is based on data from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2004.

Postal Addresses

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many requests have been received by the Royal Mail for changes in postal addresses in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005; and how many were agreed. [18176]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for the company. The Chief Executive, Adam Crozier, has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Retail Grocery Trade

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans he has for changes in legislation to address the issue highlighted in the Competition Report of 2000 on the retail grocery trade. [17456]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I have no plans to change legislation in this area. In its report the Competition Commission concluded that the industry was broadly competitive and made no recommendation for legislative change. Competition in the supermarket and grocery sectors is a matter for the independent competition authorities.

Trading Standards

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many trading standards investigations have been carried out in each London borough in the last year for which figures are available. [16900]

Mr. Sutcliffe: DTI does not collect specific information on the number of investigations undertaken by trading standards departments. However as part of the National Performance Framework for trading standards, we do ask that they tell us how many complaints from consumers they have dealt with and how many businesses were either inspected or given advice.

The following data indicates trading standards activity across the 32 London boroughs during 2004–05—the latest year for which data is available.

	Number of businesses visited or given advice	Number of consumer complaints responded to
Corporation of London	[1]	[1]
Inner London		
Camden	300	1,200
Greenwich	112	1,114
Hackney	[1]	[1]
Hammersmith and Fulham	194	1,067
Islington	283	1,491
Kensington and Chelsea	137	1,371
Lambeth	[1]	[1]
Lewisham	820	2,224
Southwark	n/a	3,000
Tower Hamlets	61	3,001
Wandsworth	620	2,449
Westminster	1,046	3,026
Outer London		
Barking and Dagenham	[1]	[1]
Barnet	[1]	[1]
Bexley	124	3,673
Brent & Harrow	3,480	4,726
Bromley	80	5,026
Croydon	1,448	2,008
Ealing	148	1,363
Enfield	960	3,383
Haringey	183	2,137
Havering	1,254	402
Hillingdon	506	3,480
Hounslow	[1]	[1]
Kingston-upon-Thames	822	792
Merton	366	1,681
Newham	[1]	[1]
Redbridge	[1]	[1]
Richmond-upon-Thames	902	3,067
Sutton	346	3,414
Waltham Forest	1,114	2,434

[1] No data available

Worker Exploitation

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what UK legislation there is to protect workers abroad from exploitation by UK companies. [18455]

Mr. Sutcliffe: We actively encourage UK-based international companies which operate in other countries, and which are subject to the laws applicable in those countries to apply high standards of corporate behaviour, including adhering to relevant internationally agreed standards which protect workers' rights.

The UK has played a leading role in ensuring that the international framework to promote and to tackle abuses of those rights throughout the world is in place, particularly through its work with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), which is the UN specialised agency responsible for developing, promoting and monitoring labour standards. We play an active role in the ILO Committee on Multinational Enterprises and support the promotion and follow-up of the ILO Declaration of Principles Concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy which seeks to enhance the positive social and labour effects of multinational corporations' operations throughout the world.

We also promote the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, which recommend standards of responsible business conduct for businesses operating in or from the 37 adhering countries and have written to the FTSE 100 companies to raise awareness of these expectations. We have also set out our approach to encouraging environmentally and socially responsible practice internationally in our International Strategic Framework on Corporate Social Responsibility published in March.

DEFENCE

African Peace-building

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what role the Department is playing in strengthening African peace-building capabilities. [17636]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence contributes to the strengthening of African peace-building capabilities by training and advising various African armed forces in Peace Support operations.

This is achieved in three ways. Firstly, through UK-based professional training of African officers. Secondly, through four permanently deployed teams training Africans for Peace Support operations, including specific pre-deployment training. These teams are the British Peace Support Team in Kenya, the British Peace Support Team in South Africa, the British Defence Assistance Team in Nigeria, the British Military Assistance and Advisory Team in Ghana and the UK element of the International Military and Advisory Team in Sierra Leone. Thirdly, through our direct support to international training centres in Africa. Examples are the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Ghana, the Peace Support Training Centre in Kenya, the Tactical Peace Support Training Centre in Bloemfontein, South Africa and the Jaji Peacekeeping Training Wing in Nigeria. Helping to build such training centres as well as training the trainers has a major multiplier effect.

In addition to our network of Defence Attachés, around 120 British armed forces personnel are leased in Sub-Saharan Africa to assist in these tasks.

Aircraft Carriers

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) when he expects to make the final contract award for the Royal Navy's new aircraft carriers; and how many aircraft carriers the award will be for; [18152]

(2) where it is intended to assemble the Royal Navy's new aircraft carriers; [18153]

(3) what decisions have been taken concerning the allocation of construction work for the Royal Navy's Aircraft Carrier Programme; what decisions have been taken about the number of ship sections involved in the construction; and what decisions have been taken about the allocation of these sections between different shipyards. [18589]

Mr. Ingram: The decision on the ship build strategy, including assembly, for the two future aircraft carriers (CVF) and any associated contracts has yet to be taken but will form part of our main investment decision on CVF. This will happen when we are confident that the

design is right, the contracts are right and we have sufficient understanding of cost, scheduling and risks involved.

Apache Helicopters

Mr. Scott: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total cost is of the procurement of AH-64 helicopters for the British Army. [18391]

Mr. Ingram: The overall value of the contracts for the Apache AH Mkl was approximately £3.9 billion.

Defence Exhibition

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which governments were invited by the Defence Export Services Organisation to participate in the Defence Systems and Equipment International exhibition in September; and which were represented at that exhibition. [18178]

Mr. Ingram: The information requested can be found on the internet at:
www.deso.mod.uk/latest.htm

Departmental Expenditure Plans

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what errors have been identified to date in his Department's expenditure plans for 2005–06 to 2007–08; and if he will make a statement. [17451]

Mr. Ingram: An error has been identified on page 32, Table 10 (Long Term Projects) of the MOD's Government Expenditure Plans 2005–06 to 2007–08 (Cmd 6532) for Project D154 Phase 3 costs. The table incorrectly states the cost as £524 million because costs that properly fall outside the scope of D154 Phase 3 were misattributed and also because of double-counting due to a technical change in accounting treatment. We do not expect D154 Phase 3 costs to exceed £100 million.

In light of this error, officials are currently reviewing the table for consistency and accuracy. If any further material errors are identified, I will write to the hon. Member and place copies in the Library of the House.

Departmental Priorities

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's highest priorities are for the next 12 months. [18321]

John Reid: The highest priorities for the Ministry of Defence are: continued success in our current operational areas and the modernisation of the UK's armed forces as set out in "Delivering Security in a Changing World, Future Capabilities" (Cm 6269).

The Public Service Agreement for the Ministry of Defence sets out our specific objectives and performance targets and can be viewed at "2004 Spending Review: Public Service Agreements 2005–2008" (Cm 6238).

Hercules Crash (Iraq)

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the Board of Inquiry into the Hercules crash in Iraq will complete its work; whether its report will go to Ministers before its publication; and when it will be published. [18726]

John Reid *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* I will release the findings of the Board of Inquiry as soon as the relevant work is complete.

HMS Cygnet

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence who the purchaser was of the Bird class patrol vessel HMS Cygnet, disposed of by his Department in 1996; and what broker was used in the transaction. [17711]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* The Ministry of Defence's Disposal Services Agency (DSA) sold the Bird class patrol vessel HMS Cygnet in 1996 to ASL Technics. It was a direct sale using competitive tender procedures.

HMS Intrepid

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what tenders were sought by his Department for the breaking of HMS Intrepid; what responses were received from ship breaking firms based *(a)* inside and *(b)* outside the UK; and how many of the bidders were able to demonstrate compliance with the Environment Agency's environmental criteria. [18157]

Mr. Ingram: 39 companies were invited to tender for ex-HMS Intrepid:

Able UK Ltd.
AGS Ltd.
AWA Refiners Ltd.
B. P. B. Recycling
Babcock Rosyth Defence Ltd.
Belmont Drew Ltd.
C. K. Metals
Cronifer UK Ltd.
Dido Trading S. A.
Duddon Valley Shipbreakers
Eckhardt Marine GMBH
Environ Group Ltd.
European Metal Recycling Ltd.
G. D. Metal Recycling Ltd.
HMS Fearless & Intrepid Association
J. & G. Metals Group
J. Fenton & Sons (Contractors) Ltd.
Leavesley International
M. & M. Day Ltd.
M. & W. A. Anthracite Ltd.
Marlboro Shipbrokers Ltd.
Marie
Marine Salvage
Marine Support & Towage Ltd.
Messrs Bradley & Ashley
Metal Merchants UK Ltd.
Mil-Ver Metal Company Ltd.
N. V. Van Heyghen
PAVERA
R. M. Supplies (Inverkeithing) Ltd.

RAMCO
Resyna SL
Rochdale Metal Recovery Ltd.
Ship Side Services SL
Shipbreaking (Queenborough) Ltd.
Ships Management Ltd.
Shepherd Offshore Ltd.
Sims Metals (Wessex) Ltd.
Wear Dockyard Ltd.

Of these, only nine companies responded:
Able UK
AGS Ltd.
Belmont Drew Ltd.
Dido Trading S. A.
Environ Group Ltd.
Leavesley International
Marlboro (Shipbrokers) Ltd.
N. V. Van Heyghen
Shepherd Offshore Ltd.

Of the nine bidders, six firms were based in the UK:
Able UK
Belmont Drew Ltd. (intended to decontaminate in UK and break in China)
Environ Group Ltd. (intended to break in Turkey)
Leavesley International
Marlboro (Shipbrokers) Ltd. (intended to break in Lithuania)
Shepherd Offshore Ltd.

The remaining three were firms based outside the UK:
AGS Ltd. (Turkey)
Dido Trading S. A. (Greece) (intended to break in Turkey)
N. V. Van Heyghen (Belgium)

None were able to demonstrate compliance with the necessary criteria.

Iran

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he was first informed that military equipment supplied by Iran may have been used against British soldiers in southern Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [17155]

John Reid: I first became aware in early summer 2005 of reports suggesting that military equipment originating in Iran may have been used against British soldiers in Southern Iraq. New types of explosive devices are being used—not just against British Forces, but elsewhere in Iraq—and the nature of those devices suggests a connection with Lebanese Hezbollah, which is supported by Iran. We cannot, however be certain of this at the present time, and while we continue to investigate the matter, we will continue to stress to the Iranian authorities the need for non-interference in the internal affairs of Iraq.

Iraq

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the use in theatre of unarmoured and armoured Land Rovers in Iraq. [18478]

Mr. Ingram: British forces use both armoured and non-armoured Land Rovers in Iraq, the choice of vehicle for a particular operation, patrol or other journey being dependent on the commander's assessment of the nature of the task and the current threat. That threat level is kept under continuous review. If the operational situation requires it, additional protection can be—and is—provided.

Joint Combat Aircraft

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to announce the stations at which the Joint Combat Aircraft will be based; and what consultations there have been with local planning authorities prior to such a decision being made regarding *(a)* noise and *(b)* other environmental matters. [17940]

Mr. Ingram: I expect to announce the outcome of the JCA basing study later this year. Ministry of Defence officials have held discussions with relevant local authorities, which have included aircraft noise and environmental matters.

Members' Visits

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what level of security clearance hon. Members must have to be allowed to visit departmental sites. [18961]

Mr. Touhig: Any request from a Member of Parliament to visit a Defence establishment is considered on a case by case basis, taking into account the circumstances of the request. These include, for instance, the timing of the visit, practical issues, the effect on operations and security considerations. Members are not required to hold a security clearance when visiting departmental sites; however, the principle of the need to know applies to the protection of, and access to, defence sites and other sensitive Government assets. Visits are at the discretion of Ministers and, where possible, Members are afforded briefings up to the level of RESTRICTED when visiting MOD establishments. This is a facility MOD Ministers have provided to allow MPs a greater insight into defence issues and to allow them better to serve their constituents.

Military Airfields (Deportation)

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) which military airfields in the United Kingdom are used by aircraft that are transporting individuals who are being deported or otherwise involuntarily transferred from the United States to another country; [16676]

(2) what records are maintained by his Department of individuals who are deported or otherwise involuntarily transferred from the United States to another country, in instances where they are transported on flights which land in the United Kingdom. [16677]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has not authorised, nor received any requests for, use of UK airspace, airports or air stations for this purpose.

Nuclear Disarmament

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's policy is on nuclear disarmament. [18320]

John Reid: The UK is committed to disarmament as set out under Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation treaty and has taken a number of steps towards that goal. Among many measures, we have reduced the total explosive power of our nuclear forces by over 70 per cent. since the end of the cold war. The UK is firmly committed to multilateral negotiations towards mutual, balanced and verifiable reductions in nuclear weapons and has taken a number of other proactive steps in the spirit of our obligations. When we are satisfied with progress towards our goal of the global elimination of nuclear weapons we will ensure that the remaining British nuclear weapons are included in negotiations.

Procurement Review

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many official submissions on topics and issues to be taken into account have been received, since his Department first announced a procurement review on 26 August; and how many of these have been submitted by *(a)* industry and business, *(b)* trade unions, *(c)* non-governmental organisations and *(d)* the general public. [17659]

Mr. Ingram: Since the announcement of the work on the Defence Industrial Strategy on the 26 August, the Ministry of Defence has received:

16 formal submissions representing the views of individual companies;

three letters expressing the views of trade associations;

five contributions from members of the general public.

These do not include informal exchanges (such as those conducted via e-mail) with industry and trade associations around the DIS process, of which there have also been a large number.

Ministers and officials have also had the opportunity to hear at first hand the views of industry—both at the individual company and wider sectoral level—during the numerous meetings that have been conducted over the same period.

Although Ministers and officials have met with trade union representatives on a number of occasions to discuss the DIS, no formal inputs have been received from them as yet.

More information can be found on the Defence Industrial Strategy website which includes a public forum, and can be found at http://www.mod.uk/issues/industry/

QinetiQ

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether surplus research and related funding from the Department to QinetiQ can be used for commercial purposes. [16834]

Mr. Ingram: There is no surplus research and related funding. However, as with all other external suppliers, if QinetiQ makes a profit on Ministry of Defence-tasked work it is able to use this for commercial purposes. Similarly, the ownership of the Intellectual Property generated by QinetiQ, and other research providers, is normally invested in the company carrying out the research. As such (subject to national security implications), research providers may use the knowledge generated by them for wider commercial purposes, furthering national wealth creation.

RAF Innsworth

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent action he has taken to secure *(a)* a tenant and *(b)* a purchaser for the RAF Innsworth site; and if he will make a statement. [18491]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* The RAF Innsworth site has not been declared surplus to MOD requirements. Were it to be so, Defence Estates (DE) would first offer the site to other Government Departments and agencies by means of English Partnerships' (EP) register. This is done before considering the former owner position or offering the property for sale on the open market. Against this background it would be premature to seek out potential tenants or purchasers.

Royal Irish Regiment

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Home Service part-time members of the Royal Irish Regiment have *(a)* up to five, *(b)* more than five, *(c)* more than 10, *(d)* more than 15, *(e)* more than 20, *(f)* more than 25 and *(g)* more than 30 years' service. [17674]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* The length of service for Royal Irish (Home Service) part-time officers and soldiers (as at 1 August 2005) is as follows (data subjected to rounding):

Years	*Number*
0 to 5	130
5 to 10	270
10 to 15	410
15 to 20	160
20 to 25	90
25 to 30	60
30+	50

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to announce the details of the redundancy and resettlement packages to be made available to full-time and part-time members of the Home Service Battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment. [17675]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* We have now received responses from several of the Northern Ireland political parties in response to our invitation for views on how those Home Service officers and soldiers currently serving might, should they wish, contribute to the UK's future Defence commitments, and on redundancy and resettlement provision that might be made for those who leave the armed forces. These views are currently being considered as part of our on-going work to finalise an appropriate package.

We recognise that members of the Home Service Battalions are anxious to know the outcome of this work and our planning is continuing as a matter of urgency. A substantive announcement will be made as soon as this work is complete, but I cannot give a date at this stage.

UK Maritime Industrial Strategy

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what effects he expects collaboration with the French on the future aircraft carriers to have on the UK's maritime industrial strategy. [15395]

Mr. Ingram: Work is continuing in consultation with industry to develop a Maritime Industrial Strategy (MIS) with the aim of improving industrial performance, quality and efficiency, reducing MOD costs and determining how best to sustain the UK's naval maritime industrial capability and in particular those elements deemed important under the emerging Defence Industrial Strategy.

Given that both we and France are embarking on major, complex carrier procurement projects, we are examining areas of mutual benefit and opportunities to deliver economies. Co-operation through industry-to-industry links may offer potential benefits to both sides and they are still assessing what these might be. It is for industry to put forward proposals which will be judged on their merits and in light of national policies.

Waiting Times

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps are taken to monitor treatment waiting times for servicemen and women who are referred from military primary care to NHS consultants. [18473]

Mr. Touhig: Servicemen or women can be referred from military primary care to NHS consultants via two routes. The first is through Ministry of Defence Hospital Units (MDHUs), where waiting times are monitored using contracts held by Director Healthcare, part of the Defence Medical Services Department.

Alternatively, if a patient has been treated in a non-MDHU hospital, Single Service primary care organisations monitor waiting times either centrally or at the individual practice level.

Welfare

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence in how many countries the Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes provide welfare. [19139]

Mr. Touhig: The Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes (NAAFI) currently provide welfare services in Cyprus, Germany, Gibraltar, Falkland Islands, Ascension Island, Brunei, Belize, Iraq, Afghanistan, Kenya, The Balkans (Kosovo and Bosnia), as well as the United Kingdom.

NAAFI additionally provides welfare services on board HM Ships, and on exercises worldwide.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Housing Benefit

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many recipients of housing benefit had been claiming for *(a)* less than a year and *(b)* more than five years in each year since 1997, broken down by region; [5481]

(2) what the average duration of claim for recipients of housing benefit was in each year since 1997, broken down by region. [5482]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not collected centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Jobcentres (Opening Times)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the Jobcentres in England for which opening times and numbers of days per week open were cut or restricted in 2004–05; what such cuts or restrictions are planned for *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* 2006–07; what the reduction in opening times is in each case; and if he will make a statement. [18416]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie to Mr. Laws, dated 18 October 2005:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning the opening times for Jobcentres in England. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

The majority of Jobcentre Plus offices are open for standard hours. Some smaller offices open for reduced hours. Customers have increased access to Jobcentre Plus services outside these hours through the internet and telephone.

The opening hours of many offices changed during 2004–05 as we rolled out the new Jobcentre Plus network. Such changes will continue in different localities into 2006 as that process completes. Office opening hours form part of our local service delivery plans and we will engage with key stakeholders about any variations before these plans are implemented.

The more detailed information you requested is not collected centrally and I regret that I am unable to give a more substantive reply.

Jobseeker's Allowance

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions why those signing on for jobseeker's allowance will not receive reimbursement of travel expenses when required to travel following the closure of a local job centre. [17914]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer Friday 14 October 2005]:* The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie to Mr. Michael Fallon, dated 18 October 2005:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning reimbursement of travel expenses to Jobseeker's Allowance customers following the closure of a Jobcentre. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus. There are long established rules for reimbursing Jobseeker's Allowance customers for

attending a Work Focused Interviews, principally where the interview does not fall on their normal signing day. For normal fortnightly attendance to sign-on, customers are expected to meet the cost of their journey to the office. Where the closure of an office means customers having to travel over an hour to the nearest office we will consider if postal signing is appropriate.

We are investing in modern, welcoming offices to provide a single point of access to Jobcentre Plus services. Previously, a Jobseeker's Allowance customer may have had to visit a Jobcentre for job vacancies and to start a claim and to visit a social security office to sort out the payment of benefit. The new service brings this together in an integrated, personal service for customers.

In planning the new network of Jobcentre Plus offices, local managers take into account many factors including population spread, availability and cost of public transport, and the distance between offices. We are locating the new offices where there are good transport links.

Inevitably as the office network changes, there will be some customers who find they have to travel further. Jobcentre Plus is actively working with local partners to ensure these hard to reach communities have access to services. We are often able to provide outreach facilities, ensuring access to job vacancies, advice and information through third party premises.

Customers are now using our offices differently. More of our face-to-face customer contact is on an appointment basis and information on job vacancies is readily available by telephone and internet. This enables staff in our offices to focus on those customers in greatest need of support to return to work.

I hope this is helpful in explaining the changes we are making and our policy on reimbursing customers' travel expenses.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he will answer the question tabled by the right hon. Member for Birkenhead on 11 July 2005, ref. 12146. [17638]

Mr. Plaskitt: An answer was given on 19 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1644W.

HEALTH

Abortions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many abortions were undertaken by *(a)* prostaglandins and *(b)* dilation and evacuation in the last period for which figures are available, broken down by weeks' gestation at which the procedure was undertaken. [16691]

Caroline Flint: This information is contained in table 8 of the Department's statistical bulletin 2005/11 "Abortion Statistics, England and Wales: 2004", which is available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/4/11/75/74/04117574.pdf.

Copies are also available in the Library.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many doctors undertook *(a)* more than 1,000, *(b)* more than 500 and *(c)* more than 100 abortions in the last year for which figures are available. [16692]

Caroline Flint: This information can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate her Department has made of the cost to the NHS of treating physical and psychological illness arising from termination of pregnancy in the last four years for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [16693]

Caroline Flint: The Department does not collect this information and no estimate of cost has been made.

Abortion is a very safe procedure and complications are uncommon. The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists' evidence-based clinical guideline, "The Care of Women Requesting Induced Abortion" states that any woman considering an abortion must have all the facts, including accurate information about possible complications, so that she can make an informed decision.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many women have had terminations beyond the 24 week time limit in each of the last five years; [18738]

(2) how many abortions were carried out in each of the last five years; [18739]

(3) how many abortions were performed on girls under the age of 16 years in each of the last five years. [18740]

Caroline Flint: The information, up to and including 2001 data, is contained in the annual Office for National Statistics publication, "Abortion Statistics", series AB; Office for National Statistics and, from 2002, Department of Health, Statistical Bulletins 2003/23, 2004/14, 2005/11; copies of which are available in the Library and on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk.

Ambulance Service

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been since November 2003 in the information that is collected centrally by her Department on performance by ambulance trusts against response time targets; and if she will make it her policy to pass on parliamentary questions from hon. Members concerning the operation of ambulance trusts directly to those trusts in cases where her Department does not hold the information centrally. [13146]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 18 July 2005]:* The only change made since November 2003 to the data collected is that, from 1 October 2004, information about category B and C emergency calls is collected separately; prior to this date category B and C calls were grouped together. This published information is used to form the basis of replies to hon. and right hon. Members' questions. We always try to be as helpful to Members as possible but, on occasions, this may mean indicating that information is not held centrally. It is always open to hon. and right hon. Members to pursue queries about individual organisations with those organisations themselves direct.

Breast-feeding

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of women have breast-fed their babies in each of the last five years for up to *(a)* a week, *(b)* a month, *(c)* six months and *(d)* a year. [18813]

Caroline Flint: The infant feeding survey 2000 recorded the prevalence of breast-feeding for infants at ages up to nine months for England and Wales. This information is shown in the table.

Age of infants	*Percentage*
One week	57
Six weeks	54
Four months	29
Six months	22
Nine months	14

Figures for the prevalence of breast-feeding each year since 2000 are not available. However, the 2005 infant feeding survey is currently under way and results are expected to be published in 2007.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her Department's guidance on the optimum period for breast-feeding is; and whether she plans to submit this guidance to expert review. [18814]

Caroline Flint: The Department recommends exclusive breast-feeding for the first six months of an infant's life. This is in line with advice provided by the scientific advisory committee on nutrition (SACN), following the World Health Organisation's (WHO) review on the optimal duration of exclusive breast-feeding in 2001.

The Department also recommends that breast-feeding, and/or breast milk substitutes, if used, should continue beyond the first six months along with appropriate types and amounts of solid foods. Mothers who are unable to, or choose not to, follow these recommendations should be supported to optimise their infants' nutrition. There are currently no plans to undertake a further expert review.

Cancelled Operations

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cancelled operations there have been at the Eastbourne district general hospital in each of the last 12 months. [17242]

Caroline Flint: Data on cancelled operations is not collected at hospital level. However, the data is available for national health service trusts. Data is shown in the table for East Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust, which manages Eastbourne district hospital, for the last four quarters—monthly data is not collected. The data shown and collected is the number of operations cancelled at the last minute rather than the total number of cancelled operations.

East Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust: last minute cancellations for non-clinical reasons

	Quarter	*Strategic health authority code*	*Number*
2005–06	1	Q19	188
2004–05	4	Q19	284
2004–05	3	Q19	79
2004–05	2	Q19	144

Note:
Figures taken from cancelled operations for non clinical reasons, NHS organisations in England

The data is available on the Department's website at:
http://www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity/data_requests/cancelled_operations.htm

Childhood Obesity

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of children in the South Swindon area are estimated to be obese. [18773]

Caroline Flint: The Department does not hold this information in the format requested.

Clostridium Difficile

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action her Department is taking to reduce cases of *Clostridium difficile* within the North West London Hospitals Trust; and if she will make a statement. [16896]

Jane Kennedy: The Department has taken no action as this is a matter for the local national health service.

However, action taken to counter the incidence of health care associated infections in general will help reduce all infections, including *Clostridium difficile* associated diarrhoea. Specific national initiatives for *Clostridium difficile* include reviewing the guidance on dealing with outbreaks and adding it to "Saving lives: a delivery programme to reduce healthcare associated infections including MRSA".

Delayed Transfers of Care

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many delayed transfers of care there were at *(a)* Eastbourne district general hospital and *(b)* the East Sussex Hospital Trust in each of the last 12 months. [17241]

Caroline Flint: Data for delayed transfers of care is not collected at hospital level, but by national health service trust. Data for East Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust, which manages Eastbourne district general hospital, is shown in the table.

	Delayed transfers of care
2004	
October	55
November	53
December	60
2005	
January	78
February	64
March	47
April	50
May	63
June	82
July	81
August	64
September	66

This data is taken from delayed transfers of care at East Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust obtained from the SITREPs collection. These figures are based on a snapshot taken on the last typical Thursday in the month.

East Sussex Chief Executive

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the terms were of the severance package agreed for the outgoing chief executive of East Sussex Hospitals Trust. [17411]

Caroline Flint: This information requested is not held by the Department. This is an employment matter between the trust and its former employee. Surrey and Sussex strategic health authority, the local headquarters of the national health service, has advised that the trust intends to publish the details of this package in the next annual accounts.

Emergency Contraception

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prescriptions for emergency contraception were issued in the Southend primary care trust area in the last year for which figures are available. [15649]

Caroline Flint: During the financial year 2004–05, there were 618 prescriptions for emergency hormonal contraception written by general practitioners and nurse prescribers within primary care in Southend-on-Sea, excluding hospital clinics.

Information about the number of prescriptions issued by family planning clinics managed by Southend-on-Sea primary care trust may be found in table 12 of "NHS Contraceptive Services, England: 2003–04", which is available in the Library and on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/09/00/22/0409022.pdf. Data for 2004–05 will be published on 28 October.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prescriptions of the morning-after pill there were in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Bedford and Hertfordshire strategic health authority in the last 10 years for which figures are available, broken down by age of recipient. [15471]

Caroline Flint: The available information is shown in the tables.

Number of prescriptions written for hormonal post-coital contraceptives by general practitioners and nurse prescribers[1]

	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire strategic health authority (SHA)	*Essex SHA*
2001	13,725	12,702
2002	12,361	11,678
2003	11,622	10,998
2004	10,446	10,408

[1] Data by age is not available

Occasions on which hormonal post-coital contraceptives dispensed at family planning clinics

	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire SHA		*Essex SHA*	
Age	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
under 15	71	88	311	218
15	195	224	420	530
16–19	1,238	1,429	2,144	2,161
20–24	799	564	1,086	1,110
25–34	418	321	544	465
35 and over	130	85	189	162
Total	2,851	2,711	4,694	4,646

GP Practices

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many single-handed GP practices there are in *(a)* England, *(b)* Greater London and *(c)* Edmonton; and if she will make a statement. [16100]

Mr. Byrne: The latest information available on the number of single-handed practices, as at 30 September 2004, are as follows:

Area	*Number*
England and Wales	2,046
London	491
Enfield Primary Care Trust	23

Health Services (Investment)

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the percentage change of investment in real terms in *(a)* mental health services and *(b)* health services as a whole was between 1999–2000 and 2002–03. [16407]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not available in the requested format. Information on the increase of the hospital and community health services (HCHS) budget and its proportion spent on mental health services between 1999–2000 and 2002–03 is shown in the table.

	Gross expenditure in cash terms (£ million)	*Percentage change of investment in real terms*
1999–2000		
Mental health	3,411	34.8
HCHS	27,633	27
2002–03		
Mental health	4,598	34.8
HCHS	35,087	27

Source:
HCHS.

Influenza

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will increase the number of treatment courses of Tamiflu above 25 per cent. of the population; and if she will make a statement; [17109]

(2) on what date the Government placed their contract for their order of Tamiflu; how many treatment courses have been received; and when she expects delivery of treatment courses for 25 per cent. of the population to be completed. [17110]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* The contract for the order of 14.6 million treatment courses of Tamiflu was placed in March. Deliveries began in August and our delivery schedule indicates that we should have received 2.5 million treatment courses by the end of October, and that our stockpile will be complete by September 2006.

We have purchased enough antivirals to treat the 25 per cent. of the population who may become ill. This figure was based upon the best available advice. We do not currently expect that the order of Tamiflu will be increased. Antiviral provision is only one element of our

strategy to deal with pandemic influenza. Other measures include providing guidance for health care workers, and the public, and working hard at accelerating vaccine production. As with all our contingency planning, we will continue to review this decision in light of any further information received.

Mental Health

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much of her Department's funding is dedicated to supporting mental health; and what plans there are to increase the funding committed to mental health. [16977]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not available in the requested format. Revenue allocations are made to primary care trusts (PCTs) based on the relative needs of their populations. It is for PCTs to determine how to use the funding allocated to them to commission services to meet the health care needs of their local populations including mental health services. In the financial year in which the national service framework for mental health was published, 1999–2000, reported gross expenditure on mental health services as part of the hospital and community health services (HCHS) budget was £4,067 million. A further £696 million was spent as part of the personal social services (PSS) budget. By 2003–04, HCHS expenditure on mental health had risen to £5,088 million and PSS expenditure to £944 million. These figures are in 2003–04 prices and they do not include spending on people with mental health problems seen solely in primary care.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to improve the *(a)* quality and *(b)* quantity of (i) therapeutic and (ii) recreational activities for patients on acute psychiatric wards; and if she will make a statement. [16989]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department is continuing to implement the national mental health workforce strategy (2004) in order to increase the numbers of staff working in mental health settings and develop their skills further. We are also continuing to encourage service providers to widen the skills mix by supplementing the existing professional roles with new ones such as support, time and recovery workers.

The national service framework for mental health (1999) and the mental health policy implementation guide on adult acute inpatient care (2002) requires a flexible range of appropriate therapeutic and recreational resources and activities to be available in mental health in-patient settings. The latter requires the creation and maintenance of a therapeutic activity milieu to include evening and weekend activities and opportunities both on and off the ward which may include educational, social, daily living, artistic, recreational and leisure activities. The national minimum standards for general adult services in psychiatric intensive care units and low secure environments (2002) requires all patients to have access to fresh air and secure external space and space for regular exercise with appropriate supervision.

Midwives/Nurses

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to give midwives more flexibility in how and when they work. [16659]

Mr. Byrne: The "Improving Working Lives" standard makes it clear that every member of staff in the national health service, including midwives, is entitled to work in an organisation which demonstrates its commitment to more flexible working conditions. It is for employers and staff to agree on flexible working patterns that meet the needs of individuals, while continuing to ensure the delivery of high quality patient care. Further information is available from "Improving Working Lives in Midwifery: a guide for midwives and managers". A copy is available in the Library.

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many applications were made in 2004–05 for the retraining of qualified nurses wishing to return to the nursing profession after a career break; and how many training places were available. [16055]

Mr. Byrne: The Department no longer collects this information, but in the previous five years, 18,000 former nurses, midwives and health visitors returned to work in the national health service.

Oestrogen

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of whether oestrogen is present in the food chain; and if she will make a statement. [17342]

Caroline Flint: Oestrogen is a naturally occurring sex hormone in animals. Consequently, it will be present in food products of animal origin.

Trust Deficits

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the financial deficits are in the *(a)* East Sussex Hospital Trust, *(b)* Eastbourne Downs Primary Care Trust and *(c)* East Sussex County Healthcare Trust; and what they were at the same point in the last financial year. [17243]

Caroline Flint: The latest year for which audited financial data is available is 2004–05. The table shows the 2003–04 and 2004–05 final outturn figures for East Sussex Hospital Trust, Eastbourne Downs Primary Care Trust (PCT), and East Sussex County Healthcare Trust.

£000

Organisation	*Final outturn*	
	2003–04	*2004–05*
East Sussex Hospital Trust	-1,787	-4,983
Eastbourne Downs PCT	-3,533	-964
East Sussex County Healthcare Trust	-1,025	9

Notes:

1. 2004–05 Figures are provisional until signed off by the National Audit Office/chief executive.
2. Final outturn is under or overspend against revenue resource limit for PCTs and surplus or deficit for NHS trusts.

Unborn Children

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice her Department gives about the earliest point in its development when an unborn child will experience pain; and if she will make a statement. [16575]

Caroline Flint: Concerns that the fetus might experience pain during investigative or therapeutic procedures or procedures to terminate a pregnancy prompted the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) to examine this issue. The RCOG's report (1997) concluded that before 26 weeks gestation the nervous system has not developed sufficiently to allow the fetus to experience pain.

Vaccines

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children have been given *(a)* the single MMR vaccine and *(b)* the three separate vaccines in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [17800]

Caroline Flint: Information about the uptake of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) immunisations and other childhood immunisations is published annually in the Department's statistical bulletins. The latest bulletin, "NHS Immunisation Statistics, England: 2004–05", is available in the Library and on the Department's website at:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsStatistics/PublicationsStatisticsArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4119649&chk=r6rIW4.

Quarterly figures on MMR Uptake from April 2005 to June 2005 are available on the Health Protection Agency website at:

http://www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/vaccination/cover_sha.htm.

The Department does not routinely collect information on uptake of single vaccines.

TREASURY

Child Trust Fund Vouchers

Julie Morgan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* £250 and *(b)* £500 child trust fund vouchers have been converted into accounts in (i) England and (ii) Wales. [19332]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: All children eligible for the child trust fund receive a £250 voucher. Children from low income families receive an additional £250 paid directly into their child trust fund account when the family's child tax credit award has been finalised. Information on the number of child trust fund vouchers issued and the number of accounts opened, including the latest data as at 31 August, is published quarterly on the HMRC website at:

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/child_trust_funds/child-trust-funds.htm

Data at a sub-UK level would be available only at disproportionate cost.

Civil Service Personnel

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the planned reduction of civil service personnel has begun. [19358]

John Healey: In Budget 2005 the Chancellor announced that Departments have delivered the first 12,500 reduction in civil service posts, towards the Government's planned gross reduction of 84,000 civil service posts by 2008. Departments will report on further progress in their Autumn Performance Reports.

Correspondence

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Yeovil of 25 April 2005 on behalf of a constituent, Mrs. Sally Noel, regarding her request for a public inquiry, and to subsequent letters written by the hon. Member on this issue on 24 June, 9 August, 6 September and 16 September. [18683]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have already done so.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Paymaster General will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) of 1 August, regarding Chard Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative. [19281]

Dawn Primarolo: I have done so.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make it his Department's policy to copy hon. Members in on correspondence arising from an intervention by hon. Members on behalf of their constituents. [19342]

Dawn Primarolo: It is the usual practice of Treasury Ministers and their officials to copy to hon. Members correspondence relating to their constituencies and their constituents. Where it is appropriate to do so, the letters concerned are also deposited in the Library of the House,

Following the debate on tax credits which the hon. Gentleman secured on 7 June in Westminster Hall, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) wrote to a number of individuals whose cases had been raised in the House. Those letters should have been copied to the hon. Members concerned, including the hon. Gentleman. I understand that they were not. I apologise for this oversight on the part of HMRC.

Departmental Rebranding

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much has been spent on rebranding in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* related agencies in each of the last five years. [18080]

John Healey: For the Treasury and National Savings and Investments, I refer respectively to the answers given by the then Financial Secretary (Ruth Kelly) to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 12 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1553W, and to the

hon. Member for Buckingham (John Bercow) on 26 February 2002, *Official Report*, column 1209W. Neither the Treasury nor NS&I has incurred any expenditure on rebranding in the intervening years. For the Chancellor's other departments and their agencies, the figures are set out in the following table.

£000

	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
HM Revenue and Customs	[1]—	1,096	749	481	501
Office for National Statistics	nil	nil	nil	122	53
Royal Mint	nil	nil	nil	nil	10
Government Actuary's Department	nil	33	nil	nil	nil
Valuation Office Agency	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
Debt Management Office	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
Office of Government Commerce	nil	nil	nil	15	nil
OGCbuying.solutions	[2]—	nil	nil	nil	102

[1] Branding spend for HM Revenue and Customs prior to 2001–02 could be provided only at disproportionate cost.
[2] OGCbuying.solutions only came into existence in 2001.

Departmental Vehicles

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many vehicles for which the Department is responsible are fitted with retreaded tyres. [17981]

John Healey: The Treasury do not own any vehicles. For information on the use of retread tyres in vehicles provided to the Department by the Government Car and Despatch Agency I refer the hon. Member to the letter of 11 October 2005 which he received from the chief executive of the GCDA, reference UIN15087 and UIN15088. Copies of this letter are available in the Library.

Devolved Administrations (Funding Formula)

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what plans his Department has to reform the Barnett formula of funding for the devolved administrations; [17299]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of alternative systems of funding for the devolved administrations; and if he will make a statement. [17300]

Mr. Des Browne: The Government keep all aspects of public expenditure under review. However the Government have no plans to replace the Barnett formula. The formula is updated on a regular basis to reflect the ONS mid-year estimates of population and revised comparability factors. The Government's funding policies for the devolved administrations were set out in the updated Statement of Funding Policy published by the Treasury in July 2004.

Earnings Statistics

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the *(a)* number and *(b)* proportion of (i) women and (ii) men in work who had earnings below the lower earnings limit in each year since 1992–93. [18630]

Dawn Primarolo: The number and proportions of individuals earning below the lower earnings limit is provided in the table.

	Weekly lower earnings limit (£)	Total (thousand)	Males (thousand)	Females (thousand)	Percentage of males earning below the lower earning limit[1]	Percentage of females earning below the lower earning limit[2]
1994–95	57	398	76	322	0.7	3.1
1995–96	58	391	76	315	0.7	2.9
1996–97	61	459	101	358	0.9	3.3
1997–98	62	841	180	661	1.5	6.0
1998–99	64	801	173	628	1.4	5.6
1999–2000	66	745	153	591	1.3	5.2
2000–01	67	693	153	540	1.2	4.6
2001–02	72	641	147	494	1.2	4.2
2002–03	75	668	161	507	1.3	4.3
2003–04	77	624	158	466	1.3	3.9
2004–05	79	581	139	442	1.1	3.7

[1] The number of males earning below the lower earning limit as a percentage of all male employees.
[2] The number of females earning below the lower earning limit as a percentage of all female employees.

Estimates in the table have been provided by the office for National Statistics and UK estimates prior to 1994 are not available.

The significant increase in the 1997–98 estimates is due to improvements in data sampling. Since spring 1997 questions on earnings in the LFS are asked of

respondents receiving their first and fifth (final) interviews. Prior to this they were only asked of people in their fifth interview.

The estimates are based on gross weekly earnings in the main job reported in the labour force survey. Figures represent a snapshot and are seasonally unadjusted—individuals' earnings may vary during the year.

ECOFIN

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment ECOFIN has made of the joint paper from the UK, Austrian and Finnish presidencies. [19360]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The written memorandum published today (18 October) sets out detail of the ECOFIN discussion, including on this item.

Electorate Size

Tim Farron: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which English constituencies experienced the greatest decrease in electorate below the age of 25 years between 1997 and 2005 in *(a)* numerical and *(b)* percentage terms, listed in descending order. [19185]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Tim Farron, dated 18 October 2005:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question concerning decreases in the electorate below the age of 25. (19185)

Only very limited age information is collected on electoral returns. Information is collected and collated on the number of attainers, i.e. those aged 16 and 17 who will be entitled to vote when they reach 18. Information is also collected on the elderly (because of exemption from jury duty), though these data are not collated centrally.

Therefore I am not able to supply the information you have requested.

Financial Services Authority

Gregory Barker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total amount of money spent on entertainment at the Financial Services Authority has been in each year since 1997. [19258]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This is a matter for the FSA. I understand that the Chairman will be writing to the hon. Member.

HM Revenue and Customs

Jim Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the rate of staff turnover was in Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs in each of the last two years in each region and country of the UK; and what the rates were for staff working on tax credits. [19269]

Dawn Primarolo: The rates of staff turnover within HMRC over the last two years are shown by government region in the following table. The rates for staff working in the Tax Credit Office are also shown, along with the geographical division of that office.

Percentage

Government Region	*2004–05*	*2003–04*
East	5.10	4.84
East Midlands	5.22	4.62
London	5.36	4.77
North East	6.53	4.72
Northern Ireland	2.89	2.69
North West	5.08	4.78
Scotland	8.31	6.47
South East	5.38	5.54
South West	5.54	5.72
Wales	4.71	4.57
West Midlands	6.70	6.46
Yorkshire and Humberside	4.91	4.36
Total	5.71	5.07

	Percentage
Tax Credit Office (NW)	5.21
Tax Credit Office (NI)	1.87
Tax Credit Office (NW)	5.05
Tax Credit Office (NI)	0.00

Jim Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of days were lost through sickness absence in Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs in each of the last two years in each region and country of the UK; and what the percentage was for staff working on tax credits. [19270]

Dawn Primarolo: Cabinet Office produce annual statistics for all Government Departments based on regional data which can be accessed via the civil service website. Data for 2004 will be published later this year. I also refer to the reply I gave on 10 January 2005, PQ127W detailing the sickness absence figures for the seven years to 2003 in Inland Revenue and HM Customs and Excise.

The average number of working days lost in 2003 for staff working in the Tax Credit Office was 16.86.

Jim Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many incidents of violence against staff working in Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs have been reported in each of the last two years in each region and country of the UK expressed as a ratio of whole time equivalent employees; and how many related to staff working on tax credits. [19272]

Dawn Primarolo: Combined figures have been collated for incidents of violence against staff for Inland Revenue and Customs & Excise departments in each of the last two years.

	Verbal/written threats	*Physical attacks on staff*
2003–04	715	73
2004–05	1,302	92
2005–06 (Q1)	340	21

Staff figures

Full-time equivalent staff in post at	*Total departments*
1 April 2003	98,130
1 April 2004	98,280
1 April 2005	97,074

Of the total number of threats and attacks on staff reported, the following numbers related to staff working on tax credits:

	Verbal and written threats and physical attacks on tax credits staff
2003–04	201
2004–05	577
2005–06 (Q1)	187

It is not possible to provide numbers of staff working solely on tax credits. Staff deal with tax credit issues in many operational areas (e.g. in Enquiry or Contact Centres) but may also deal with other types of work. Threats and attacks against such staff are included in the above figures.

Identity Card Scheme

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether a budget overrun for the identity card scheme will be underwritten by his Department. [19190]

John Healey: The Government announced it would proceed with the ID cards scheme in November 2003. At the time it was agreed that all costs will be met from existing departmental budgets and charging. This remains the case, as the Home Secretary reiterated to the House on Thursday 13 October 2005.

Income-related Benefits

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost of estimating tax liabilities for those over state pension age applying for income-related benefits. [18627]

Dawn Primarolo: No such estimate is available.

IT Projects (Gateway Reviews)

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the Government's plan for publishing Gateway reviews on IT projects. [16973]

John Healey: The Government have no plans for publishing Gateway reviews on IT projects. However, it does not operate a "blanket" exemption for Gateway information. Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 each request for information is considered on a case-by-case basis and the public interest test is carefully considered in each case.

London (Population)

Jon Cruddas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the population of *(a)* London and *(b)* each London borough has been in each of the last 10 years. [19157]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Jon Cruddas, dated 18 October 2005:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question concerning the population in London and each London Boroughs over the last ten years. (19157)

Please find attached a table showing the estimated population for Greater London, each London Borough, and the City of London from 1995 to 2004.

Total population, London and each London borough, mid-1995 to mid-2004

	1995	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*
Greater London	6,913,100	6,974,400	7,014,800	7,065,500	7,153,900
City of London	5,500	5,600	5,700	5,700	6,600
Barking and Dagenham	157,400	157,300	158,300	161,000	162,400
Barnet	299,000	303,000	304,600	308,300	313,500
Bexley	218,500	217,700	215,700	216,300	217,500
Brent	248,400	252,000	255,300	259,900	260,300
Bromley	290,000	291,700	293,100	291,700	294,900
Camden	182,500	186,300	186,200	183,900	190,000
Croydon	326,800	329,400	330,900	333,000	332,100
Ealing	288,500	292,800	294,000	296,300	302,300
Enfield	262,800	265,000	268,400	268,900	272,700
Greenwich	209,300	209,800	211,200	212,300	212,200
Hackney	192,900	193,100	191,400	194,700	199,100
Hammersmith and Fulham	153,500	155,000	155,100	155,500	160,600
Haringey	208,900	211,600	215,100	216,600	218,600
Harrow	207,000	207,200	206,900	206,700	207,900
Havering	227,600	227,100	226,000	223,600	225,700
Hillingdon	240,100	242,000	242,900	243,600	145,100
Hounslow	203,700	206,000	210,100	212,400	214,300
Islington	173,000	174,700	175,700	177,900	175,700
Kensington and Chelsea	140,600	141,100	142,100	143,100	147,700
Kingston Upon Thames	137,800	139,200	141,300	143,800	146,000
Lambeth	257,200	259,700	259,900	263,800	266,800
Lewisham	240,400	243,100	243,900	247,200	250,300
Merton	177,700	180,600	181,700	182,400	185,100
Newham	228,000	229,900	231,000	235,000	240,500
Redbridge	228,700	232,800	235,000	236,000	238,100
Richmond Upon Thames	166,600	168,700	170,000	169,900	172,800
Southwark	236,900	236,600	239,000	242,200	247,900
Sutton	174,200	175,700	177,000	177,900	179,400
Tower Hamlets	175,200	180,300	184,800	187,900	193,500

Total population, London and each London borough, mid-1995 to mid-2004

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Waltham Forest	220,400	220,000	219,800	222,300	221,100
Wandsworth	259,900	261,100	260,600	261,000	264,200
Westminster	174,200	178,500	181,800	184,700	189,200

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Greater London	7,236,700	7,322,400	7,371,200	7,387,900	7,429,200
City of London	7,000	7,400	7,700	8,000	8,600
Barking and Dagenham	163,900	165,700	165,900	165,900	164,600
Barnet	315,800	319,500	322,300	324,400	326,700
Bexley	218,700	218,800	218,600	219,100	219,500
Brent	264,900	269,600	269,700	267,800	267,700
Bromley	295,300	296,200	297,100	298,300	299,100
Camden	196,200	202,600	207,000	210,700	217,100
Croydon	334,200	335,100	335,900	336,700	340,200
Ealing	304,400	307,300	307,800	305,000	303,200
Enfield	275,100	277,300	280,000	280,300	280,000
Greenwich	214,400	217,500	221,100	223,700	225,700
Hackney	203,400	207,200	208,900	208,400	207,000
Hammersmith and Fulham	164,400	169,400	172,700	174,200	176,800
Haringey	219,800	221,300	224,300	224,700	224,300
Harrow	209,100	210,000	211,300	210,700	211,900
Havering	225,100	224,700	224,500	224,600	225,000
Hillingdon	245,900	245,600	246,800	247,600	248,700
Hounslow	214,700	216,000	215,400	212,900	212,300
Islington	177,900	179,400	180,200	180,100	179,900
Kensington and Chelsea	154,700	162,200	168,400	174,400	184,100
Kingston Upon Thames	147,300	149,000	150,100	150,400	151,800
Lambeth	270,000	273,400	271,100	268,500	268,100
Lewisham	252,100	254,300	251,900	248,300	247,000
Merton	188,200	191,100	191,700	191,400	192,300
Newham	245,500	249,400	251,800	250,600	247,700
Redbridge	239,900	241,900	242,400	245,100	247,300
Richmond Upon Thames	172,900	174,300	176,500	179,200	182,700
Southwark	252,700	256,700	255,400	253,800	254,700
Sutton	180,500	181,500	180,200	178,500	177,600
Tower Hamlets	197,100	201,100	204,600	206,600	209,300
Waltham Forest	221,300	222,000	221,900	221,600	221,800
Wandsworth	267,700	271,700	273,500	274,100	276,500
Westminster	196,500	203,300	214,400	222,000	230,000

Note:
Figures are rounded to the nearest 100 and may not add exactly due to rounding.

Lung Cancer

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many deaths there have been from lung cancer in each year since 1997, broken down by gender. [18337]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Andrew Lansley, dated 18 October 2005:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many deaths there have been from lung cancer in each year since 1997, broken down by gender.

The latest year for which data are available is 2003. Figures for lung cancer for males and females are shown in the table below for each year from 1997 to 2003.

Number of deaths from lung cancer[1], by sex, England and Wales, 1997 to 2003[2]

Calendar year	Male	Female
1997	19,087	10,889
1998	19,036	11,163
1999	18,342	11,151
2000	17,993	11,036
2001[3]	17,579	11,149
2002[3]	17,447	11,359
2003[3]	17,155	11,610

[1] The cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) for the years 1997 to 2000, and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) for2001 onwards. The codes used are listed:

Malignant neoplasm of trachea, bronchus and lung—ICD-9 162; ICD-10 C33-C34;

[2] Figures are based on deaths occurring in each calendar year.

[3] The introduction of ICD-10 for coding cause of death in 2001 means that data for lung cancer are not completely comparable with data for years before this date. The data should therefore be interpreted with caution. The effect of the change in classification in 2001 on deaths from cancer by site is described in an article published in August 2004.[4]

[4] Brock A, Griffiths C, Rooney C (2004) The effect of the introduction of ICD-10 on cancer mortality trends in England and Wales. 'Health Statistics Quarterly' 23, 7–17.

Manufacturing

Mr. Walker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of the UK workforce was accounted for by the manufacturing sector in each year since 1996; and if he will make a statement. [18552]

John Healey: Since 1996 the number of workforce jobs has increased by over 2.5 million or 9.2 per cent. These gains have been achieved despite a fall in manufacturing jobs over this period of over 1 million, which accounted for 16 per cent. of total jobs in 1996 and 11.2 per cent. in 2005. The decline in the manufacturing workforce is more than balanced by rises in other sectors. Falling manufacturing employment is a common feature across all advanced economies, with the share of manufacturing employment falling in all G7 countries since 1996 with the exception only of Canada.

National Insurance

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* women and *(b)* men of working age were (i) not making national insurance contributions and (ii) not receiving national insurance contribution credits, in each of the last 20 years. [18631]

Dawn Primarolo: The number of individuals not making national insurance contributions can be estimated by subtracting the number of individuals making national insurance contributions from population estimates. Information on the estimated number of individuals making national insurance contributions is shown in Table CQY 1.0 'Number of people who paid National Insurance Contributions during the tax year by type of contribution' on the Department for Work and Pensions' internet website:

http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/dsu/contsandqualify/Conts_and_Qual_Years_tables05.xls

Population estimates for the UK are prepared by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and can be found at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/explorer.asp?CTG=3&SL=4819&D=4819&DCT=0&DT=32#4819

Similarly, the number of individuals not receiving national insurance contribution credits can be found by subtracting the number of individuals receiving national insurance contribution credits in the provided table from the ONS population estimates.

Number of individuals receiving national insurance contributions credits

Thousand

Tax year	*Female*	*Male*	*All*
1978–79	2,861	4,087	6,948
1979–80	2,974	4,006	6,979
1980–81	3,205	4,634	7,840
1981–82	3,399	5,194	8,593
1982–83	3,716	5,745	9,461
1983–84	3,814	6,804	10,617
1984–85	3,965	6,986	10,951
1985–86	4,101	7,059	11,160
1986–87	4,213	7,076	11,289
1987–88	3,838	6,783	10,621
1988–89	3,557	6,320	9,878
1989–90	3,381	6,091	9,471
1990–91	3,388	6,297	9,685
1991–92	3,529	6,899	10,428
1992–93	3,590	7,202	10,792
1993–94	3,627	7,243	10,869
1994–95	4,051	7,318	11,369
1995–96	4,331	7,233	11,564
1996–97	4,412	7,039	11,451
1997–98	4,259	6,641	10,900
1998–99	4,127	6,333	10,460
1999–2000	4,277	6,380	10,656
2000–01	4,330	6,375	10,705
2001–02	4,412	6,337	10,749
2002–03	4,465	6,312	10,777
2003–04	4,051	5,946	9,996

Combining the information on contributions and credits does not give the full picture as some people may have both contributions and credits in a year, and may or may not build up a full record and so accrue a qualifying year for State Pension. A more complete picture can be found from Table CQY Summary 'Number of people who have accrued a qualifying year for State Pension, by method of accrual and tax year' which can be found from the same Department for Work and Pensions internet website link as mentioned. This table includes Home Responsibilities Protection, but is still subject to revision in future years as individuals may pay voluntary contributions up to six years in arrears in order to fill gaps in their contributions record.

Estimates on the number of individuals receiving national insurance contribution credits have been provided by DWP. The latest information available is for 2003–04.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of *(a)* women and *(b)* men aged (i) 35 to 39, (ii) 40 to 44, (iii) 45 to 49, (iv) 50 to 54, (v) 55 to 59 and (vi) 60 to 65 years (A) has a full record of national insurance contributions, (B) is missing up to two years of full contributions, (C) is missing up to five years of full contributions, (D) is missing up to 10 years of full contributions and (E) is missing more than 10 years of full contributions. [18647]

Dawn Primarolo: Information on the number of individuals with full national contribution records or missing qualifying years for State Pension by sex and age is provided in the table. The proportions of individuals with full or missing records of national insurance contributions can be estimated by dividing the number of individuals with full or missing records by population estimates of their respective sex and age group. Population estimates for the UK are prepared by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and can be found at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/explorer.asp?CTG=3&SL=4819&D=4819&DCT=0&DT=32#4819

All: Number of individuals with full and missing national insurance contributions by age 2003–04

Thousand

Qualifying years	All	under 20	20 to 34	35 to 39	40 to 44	45 to 49	50 to 54	55 to 59	60 to 65
Full	13,322	2,581	3,507	1,549	1,525	1,228	997	1,011	924
Up to 2 years missing	7,098	324	3,172	1,091	926	710	439	329	107
3 to 5 years missing	5,748	—	2,701	748	723	581	515	387	93
6 to 10 years missing	3,365	—	1,113	436	399	397	480	461	79
Over 10 years missing	3,047	—	346	350	355	385	564	756	290

Male: Number of individuals with full and missing national insurance contributions by age 2003–04

Thousand

Qualifying years	All	Under 20	20 to 34	35 to 39	40 to 44	45 to 49	50 to 54	55 to 59	60 to 65
Full	7,679	1,318	1,742	742	751	687	720	795	924
Up to 2 years missing	3,340	156	1,464	442	394	316	237	225	107
3 to 5 years missing	2,791	—	1,313	378	341	245	222	198	93
6 to 10 years missing	1,579	—	594	246	220	164	143	132	79
Over 10 years missing	1,307	—	195	186	185	171	146	134	290

Female: Number of individuals with full and missing national insurance contributions by age 2003–04

Thousand

Qualifying years	All	under 20	20 to 34	35 to 39	40 to 44	45 to 49	50 to 54	55 to 59
Full	5,643	1,263	1,765	806	774	541	277	217
Up to 2 years missing	3,758	169	1,708	648	532	394	203	104
3 to 5 years missing	2,957	—	1,387	370	382	336	294	189
6 to 10 years missing	1,786	—	519	191	179	233	336	329
Over 10 years missing	1,740	—	151	164	171	214	418	622

Qualifying years may include national insurance credits and Home Responsibilities Protection.

The information is subject to revision as voluntary contributions to repair a contribution record may be paid up to six years in arrears.

Estimates on the number of individuals with full or missing records of national insurance contributions have been provided by the Department for Work and Pensions and are for 2003–04.

NHS Trusts

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what guidance and advice the Treasury has issued to HM Revenue and Customs in respect of the collection of PAYE and national insurance arrears from NHS trusts. [17964]

Dawn Primarolo: Her Majesty's Treasury has not given guidance or advice to Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs in respect of the collection of PAYE and national insurance arrears from NHS trusts.

Office for National Statistics

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to meet the Professional and Commercial Services Union to discuss changes in the Office for National Statistics. [19239]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. David Drew, dated 18 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning what plans the Chancellor of the Exchequer has to meet the Professional and Commercial Services Union to discuss changes in the Office for National Statistics (ONS). (19239)

John Healey MP, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, met with representatives from the Public and Commercial Services and Prospect trade unions on 20 July to discuss changes within the ONS. Having heard their concerns, Mr Healey referred the unions back to ONS management for more detailed discussion.

Pensions

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the relative effects of the proposed pension self-investment scheme on those on different wage and salary levels. [17236]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Pension simplification will provide benefits for all taxpayers, whatever their level of income. The regulatory impact assessment (RIA) "Simplifying the Taxation of Pensions" published in April 2004, which can be found at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/ria/simplifying-pensions.pdf set out an assessment of the potential impact of the whole pensions simplification package.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total amount of revenue raised by pension taxes has been in each year since 1997. [19257]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The latest estimates of the annual income tax due on pension payments are published on the HMRC website: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/pensions/7_9_sep05.pdf

Estimates for earlier years are in Inland Revenue Statistics 2000, available from the House of Commons Library.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has received regarding Government revenues from taxes on pensions between 1997 and 2005. [17286]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* The Government receive many representations from individuals and organisations on the operation of the tax system. The Chancellor keeps all aspects of the tax system under review. Decisions on tax are normally made in the Budget.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to change the minimum retirement age for stakeholder pension members; and if he will make a statement on the future of the stakeholder pension. [19259]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The new simplified regime for the taxation of pensions, which comes into effect on 6 April 2006, introduces a new minimum pension age for all tax registered pension schemes—including stakeholder pensions—of 55 by 2010.

Stakeholder pensions are an established pension product. Since their introduction in April 2001 over 2.5 million have been sold. They form an integral part of the range of Stakeholder Savings products introduced in April 2005.

Population Changes

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the projected change in population in each enumerator district is for each of the next five decades. [19238]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. David Drew, dated 18 October 2005:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question concerning projected change in population in each enumerator district for the next five decades. (19238)

The Office for National Statistics produces Subnational Population Projections that are fully consistent with the National Population Projections produced by the Government Actuary's Department. The latest of these are 2003-based and project the population over a twenty five year horizon to 2028.

The population projections are produced down to the local authority district level, the lowest geographical level for which the assumptions and calculations are considered suitably robust.

It is therefore not possible to supply enumerator district level projections.

Official 2003-based Subnational Population Projections for England were published by the Office for National Statistics in November 2004. They are available at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Product.asp?vlnk=997

Public Services (Expenditure)

David Mundell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of GDP was spent on public services in each local authority area in England in each of the past six years. [19433]

John Healey: The percentage of GDP spent on public services in each local authority area in England in each of the past six years is not available.

Regional Price Indexes

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on progress in the development of regional price indexes showing differences in regional inflation rates. [18945]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Andrew Smith, dated 18 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning the progress in the development of regional price indexes showing differences in regional inflation rates. (18945)

The Office for National Statistics has, from time to time, made estimates of inter regional differences in price levels. The most recent of these was released in Economic Trends earlier this year (Relative regional consumer price levels in 2004—Economic Trends February 2005 page 615), copies of which are available in the House of Commons Library. We do not however plan to produce regional estimates of price changes in the near future.

Our approach has been endorsed by the recent Allsopp review of Statistics for Economic Policy Making.

Self-employment (Tax Returns)

Stephen Williams: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will raise the threshold for annual turnover of the self-employed below which they may use a short version of the income and expenses section of a tax return; and if he will make a statement. [19256]

Dawn Primarolo: There are no plans to raise this threshold.

Stability and Growth Pact

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the implementation of the stability and growth pact. [19359]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The slow down in the global and European economies in recent years has tested the effectiveness of the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) in supporting both stability and growth, as well as highlighting problems surrounding the operation and design of the SGP's Excessive Deficit Procedure. The Government have consistently argued for a prudent interpretation of the SGP that takes account of country-specific factors including debt sustainability, the economic cycle and public investment.

The reforms to the Pact agreed in March 2005 rightly place a greater focus on reducing and maintaining low debt, with the flexibility for low debt countries such as the UK to invest in the provision of much needed public services. During our presidency of the EU, the UK will be working closely with member states and EU institutions to ensure effective implementation of the new Pact going forward.

Suicide Rate

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the suicide rate has been among *(a)* men and *(b)* women in each year since 1991, broken down by (i) socio-economic and (ii) ethnic group. [18377]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Andrew Lansley, dated 18 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking what the suicide rate has been amongst *(a)* men and *(b)* women in each year since 1991, broken down by (i) socio-economic and (ii) ethnic group. (18377)

Suicide rates for socio-economic groups are only available for the years 1991–1993 for males aged 20–64.[1] The available figures are for Social Class (based on occupation) and have only been calculated for this period to ensure consistency with the population information available from the 1991 Census. Deaths were combined for the three-year period to ensure that the figures are sufficiently robust. Rates for England and Wales are provided in the table below.

Comparable figures are not available by ethnic group as this is not recorded at death registration.

[1] Geographic Variations in Health, Decennial Supplement No. 16. Griffiths C. and Fitzpatrick J. London 2001.

Suicide[1] rates[2] by social class for males age 20 to 64, England and Wales, 1991–93[3]

Social class	*Rate per 100,000 population*
I—Professional	12
II—Intermediate	14
IIIN—Skilled, non-manual	21
IIIM—Skilled, manual	21
IV—Partly skilled	23
V—Unskilled	47

[1] In routine statistics, ONS defines suicides as deaths from both intentional self-harm and 'injury of undetermined intent'. These were defined using the following International Classification of Diseases Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes:

E950-E959—Suicide and self-inflicted injury; and

E980-E980, excluding E988.8—Injury undetermined whether accidentally or purposely inflicted.

[2] Directly age-standardised rates, standardised to the European Standard Population.

[3] Deaths registered in each calendar year.

Tax Credits

Norman Lamb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in Norfolk received overpayments of *(a)* child tax credits and *(b)* working tax credits in 2003–04; what the total sum overpaid was; how much of this has been written off; and how many individuals have requested write off of the amount overpaid. [17311]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates for 2003–04 of the numbers of in-work families with tax credits awards, including information on overpayments and underpayments by constituency, based on final family circumstances and incomes for 2003–04 are published in "Child and Working Tax Credits. Finalised Awards. 2003–04 Geographical Analysis". This publication and provisional estimates for the number of in-work families by constituency with tax credit awards as at selected dates in 2004–05 are available on the HMRC website at: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/cwtc-geog-stats.htm.

Information about the amounts and numbers written off is not available at a regional level.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many times hon. Members used the MPs' tax credit hotline in each month from April 2003 to the latest available date. [18046]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* For the number of calls answered by the MPs' hotline in 2003–04 and for April to December 2004, I refer my right hon. Friend to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Northavon (Steve Webb) on 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, columns 75–76W. The figures for 1 January 2005 to 31 August 2005 are given as follows.

2005 month	*Number of calls to Tax Credit Office MPs' hotline*
January	1,730
February	1,690
March	1,700
April	1,411
May	942
June	1,234
July	1,433
August	1,337

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what guidance on clarity and effective communication has been issued to staff at the tax credit office when replying to correspondence from hon. Members. [18254]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* The Customer Service Manual and Customer Contact Clarity of Writing: 2005–06 Guide has been made available to all tax credit office staff who reply to correspondence.

Mr. David Anderson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the administration of tax credits. [18723]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* On 26 May I announced six measures that HM Revenue and Customs are taking to improve how the Department communicates with tax credits families; reduce the risk of errors adding to overpayments; and improve procedures for recovering overpayments. I will keep the House informed on the progress of these measures.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the level of overpayment of tax credits in the last 12 months. [19165]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given to the hon. Member for St. Albans (Anne Main) on 13 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 428.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of the number of tax credit awards overpaid in 2004–05; what the value is of these overpayments; and if he will make a statement. [19177]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given to the hon. Member for St. Albans (Anne Main) on 13 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 428.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the administration of tax credits cost in 2004–05; [19181]

(2) what his estimate is of the cost of managing and paying tax credits in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03, *(c)* 2003–04, *(d)* 2004–05, *(e)* 2005–06 (to date), *(f)* 2005–06 (estimated) and *(g)* 2006–07 (estimated), broken down by (i) child tax credits, (ii) working tax credits and (iii) other tax credits; and if he will make a statement. [19282]

Dawn Primarolo: The costs of managing and paying working families and disabled person's tax credits are shown in the Inland Revenue Trust Accounts, at note 3 for 2001–02 and at note 4 for 2002–03.

The cost of managing and paying the child and working tax credits in the financial year 2003–04 appear in note 3 to the Trust Statement in the Inland Revenue Annual Report and Accounts for 2003–04. The same costs for the financial year 2004–05 appear in note 3 to the Trust Statement in the Inland Revenue Annual Report and Accounts for 2004–05.

Figures for future years will not be available until the Trust Statement for these years are released.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people applied for child tax credit in the last 12 months; what percentage of applications were successful; and what the average payment was in each year. [17167]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available.

Anne Milton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total cost of compensation paid by HM Revenue and Customs to those whose applications for working tax credit have not been processed satisfactorily is for each year since its introduction. [17685]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 4 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 95–96W, and the hon. Member for Tatton (Mr. Osborne) on 19 Jul 2005, *Official Report*, column 1698W.

In the five months ending 31 August 2005, compensation payments had been made to tax credits claimants with a value of around £524,000.

Tax Evasion (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* individuals and *(b)* businesses have been investigated for tax evasion in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [18148]

Dawn Primarolo: The total number of new full enquiries started in each of the last five years in Northern Ireland is set out in the following table.

These enquiries will have been taken up to tackle non compliance of many types. It is not possible to specify the proportion concerned with tax evasion, as this information is not retained centrally, and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost. In addition a number of aspect enquiries are taken up into specific technical aspects of individuals and businesses tax returns each year.

	Individuals	*Business–incorporated*	*Business–unincorporated*
2001–02	5,373	53	1,356
2001–02	4,354	50	1,389
2002–03	3,459	54	1,208
2003–04	4,156	67	1,191
2004–05	2,857	85	1,121

Unemployment (Pudsey)

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the levels of long-term *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth unemployment in Pudsey since 1997. [18916]

John Healey: The Government have put in place a broad programme of both macroeconomic and microeconomic reform since 1997 designed to improve the economic performance of all parts of the UK. Since these policies were implemented, claimant unemployment in Pudsey has fallen by almost 45 per cent. Over the same period, youth unemployment has fallen by 54 per cent. and long-term unemployment has fallen by over 90 per cent. The labour market in Pudsey is strong with high employment (82.1 per cent.) and low unemployment (3.3 per cent.).

Vehicle Emissions

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what change there has been in *(a)* road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions and *(b)* single occupancy car commuting within the Department in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05. [15799]

John Healey: Under Sustainable Development target B1, the Treasury aims to reduce its own road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions by 10 per cent. by 31 March 2006, compared to a baseline year of 2002–03. The Treasury's delivery plan for this target encourages the use of public transport, alternative transport, and the use of video and telephone conferencing facilities. Vehicle mileage claims in 2004–05 were a reduction of 38 per cent. in the number of miles claimed in 2003–04, and a reduction of 2 per cent. on the number of miles claimed in 2002–03. Six staff are currently granted parking spaces within the building, based on medical, child care or operational need, compared to 11 in 2002–03.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Building Schools for the Future Scheme

Paul Rowen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what schemes have so far been approved for the voluntary aided sector under the Building Schools for the Future scheme; and what the total value of these schemes is. [15289]

Jacqui Smith: The Government has announced 37 projects in waves 1 to 3 of Building Schools for the Future (BSF), of which 29 have at least one voluntary aided (VA) school within them.

So far 13 project outline business cases have been approved by the Treasury or the Department, and the VA schools that are included in these are listed as follows:

	VA schools
Knowsley	Kirby RC; Central RC
Lancashire	St. Theodore's RC Burnley
Leeds	Corpus Christie RC; New RC High
Leicester	English Martyrs; St. Paul's RC
Lewisham	Northbrook
Newcastle	St. Cuthbert's RC; St. Mary's RC
Solihull	The Archbishop Grimshaw RC
Stoke	St. Peter's CE; St. Margaret Ward RC; St Thomas More RC; St Joseph's RC
Waltham Forest	Holy Family RC

All the BSF projects are currently moving towards procurement, but none have been signed as yet. Funding is not finalised until contracts have been signed, and no details can be released prior to this for commercial reasons.

Bullying

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what recent discussions she has had with the Anti-Bullying Alliance on the role of punishment in tackling bullying; [18165]

(2) what plans she has to review the guidance issued by the Department on the role of punishment in tackling bullying; [18166]

(3) if she will make a statement on the role of punishment in tackling bullying. [18167]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* My officials have recently held discussions with the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) on this matter. In these discussions the Government's belief that bullying should always be punished has been made clear.

The ABA is re-framing its advice to make it clear that it is exclusion not punishment that should be seen as a last resort.

Bullying is always unacceptable and should always be punished.

The "Bullying: Don't Suffer in Silence" packs issued by the Department contain clear guidance on appropriate sanctions to deal with bullying.

Possible sanctions include, removal from the group/class, withdrawal from break and lunchtime privileges, carrying out a useful task in the school, detention, withholding participation in school trips and events not essential to the curriculum, and fixed period exclusion.

Where serious real or threatened violence is involved, the head teacher can permanently exclude the pupil. To further enforce this appeal panels and governing bodies have been advised that they should not normally seek to overrule such a decision on appeal.

The Department's advice pack, Don't Suffer in Silence, last updated in September 2002, is currently being reviewed to ensure that our advice that bullying should always be punished is sufficiently clear.

Child Care

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many childcare places have been created in Pudsey since 1997. [18933]

Beverley Hughes: The Department is unable to provide details of childcare places for the Pudsey area of Leeds as data collected is only available at local authority level.

From April 1999 to March 2005 Leeds local authority increased the stock of registered childcare places in Leeds by more than 4,500. The OFSTED registered stock of childcare in Leeds in March 2005 was 17,000 places.

Nationally, from April 1999 to March 2005 local authorities have created almost 487,000 registered childcare places. The OFSTED registered stock of childcare nationally at March 2005 was 1,175,275.

City Academies

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what academic criteria are used when determining whether a school should be replaced by a city academy. [17708]

Jacqui Smith: Proposed academy projects are assessed on a case by case basis. In coming to a judgment we use the standard range of academic assessment criteria published in performance tables. In particular we look at the A*-C GCSE rate, performance at KS3 and other performance indicators. We also look at a range of wider information sources including Ofsted judgments.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance her Department plans to issue to trustees of city academies with regard to the use of yellow school buses; and if she will make a statement. [18211]

Jacqui Smith: We have no plans to issue guidance on that topic.

Class Sizes

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what representations she has received regarding the effect of child birth rates on class sizes in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in (i) East Sussex and (ii) England; [18260]

(2) if she will make a statement on the effect of child birth rates on class sizes in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in (i) East Sussex and (ii) England. [18262]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* The Secretary of State has not received any representations regarding the effect of child birth rates on class sizes in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in (i) East Sussex and (ii) England.

It is for individual schools to determine class size, having regard to capacity and, in the case of primary schools, to infant class-size limits. Children who will reach the ages of five, six or seven within the school year must not be taught in classes larger than 30 pupils to a qualified teacher.

Changes in class size since 1998 are shown in the following table.

Average class size[1]

	East Sussex LA		England	
	Primary[2]	Secondary[2]	Primary[2]	Secondary[2]
1998	28.3	21.4	27.7	21.7
1999	28.7	22.1	27.5	21.9
2000	28.2	22.1	27.1	22.0
2001	28.2	22.3	26.7	22.0
2002	27.6	21.9	26.3	21.9
2003	27.5	21.8	26.3	21.9
2004	27.5	21.9	26.2	21.8
2005	27.6	21.8	26.2	21.7

[1] Classes as taught during a single selected period in each school on the day of the census in January.
[2] Includes middle schools as deemed
Source:
Annual Schools Census

Nationally births fell from 667.3 thousand in England in 1990 to a low point of 564.0 thousand in 2001, but have since risen to 607.4 thousand in 2004. The recent rise in births reflects a rise in fertility rates since 2001 but it is not known yet whether this is the start of a sustained rise.

Fertility rates in East Sussex are a little lower than the national average but have shown similar trends. There were 5,325 births in East Sussex in 1990 and these fell to a low of 4,530 in 2002. They have since risen to 4,811 in 2004.

Many local authorities are facing falling primary rolls. Funding empty places can represent a poor use of resources particularly where schools with spare places also perform poorly. Working with local authorities and other partners we have developed a toolkit offering practical advice to help local authorities and schools manage falling rolls. The toolkit is available at www.teachernet.gov.uk/falling rolls.

Cumbrian Literacy Strategy

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if the Government will extend the Cumbrian Literacy Strategy to dyslexic children elsewhere in the country; [17729]

(2) what the Government's policy is regarding the Cumbrian Literacy Strategy for children with dyslexia. [17730]

Maria Eagle: It is open to local authorities and schools to use whichever strategy they feel appropriate to meet the learning needs of a child with dyslexia. The Department commissioned research, published in 2002, into the effectiveness of intervention schemes for children with literacy difficulties. The research included a number of schemes which make reference to children with dyslexia including Reading Intervention (formerly Cumbria Reading with Phonology Project). The successful interventions readily available to schools were listed in a subsequent National Literacy Strategy publication on choosing and implementing interventions for children with significant literacy difficulties, and Reading Intervention was among those listed.

The Department has asked Jim Rose, former HMI Director of Inspection at Ofsted, to undertake a review to advise on best practice in teaching early reading, including the role played by synthetic phonics, and the range of provision necessary to support children who have fallen behind in literacy to catch up with their peers. This advice will inform our work to renew the National Literacy Framework for Teaching to ensure that it reflects the most recent and relevant research and evidence for all learners. The review will also inform the work of the new Early Development and Learning Framework which, together with the renewed Literacy Framework, will help ensure that there is a coherent progression path in early literacy for all learners.

Departmental Guidance

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pages of departmental guidance have been sent to headteachers in Northamptonshire in each of the last five years. [17103]

Jacqui Smith: The Department ceased sending publications automatically to schools in England on a phased basis between April and December 2004. The service to Northamptonshire was discontinued in October 2004. Our detailed research showed that a significant number of schools wanted greater freedom to choose the publications they wanted, when they wanted them and to be able to order paper copies in the multiples they require. We have given schools this choice by introducing an online ordering system and fortnightly email service, notifying schools of new and important publications. This puts schools in control of what they receive and when they receive it.

Education Institutions (Brent)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the performance of *(a)* Capital City Academy and *(b)* other secondary schools in Brent; and if she will make a statement. [16895]

Jacqui Smith: Ofsted inspectors carried out a monitoring visit at Capital City Academy during May this year, focusing on pupil attainment. The visit was very positive and the report noted much has been achieved in the academy's second year and that the principal and governors have 'brought the focus for thinking, planning and action firmly on strategies to raise attainment'. A full inspection of the academy, which will be published on the Ofsted website, is due before the end of this academic year.

The 2005 key stage 3 results are a reflection of some of the improvements mentioned by Ofsted. English was 41 per cent. up from 28 per cent. in 2004 and Maths was 37.9 per cent. up from 35 per cent. in 2004. These figures represent an overall increase of 30.1 per cent. and 24.9 per cent. respectively since opening. Science was 21.8 per cent. down marginally from 23 per cent. but there has been an overall increase of 11.8 per cent. since

opening. The 2005 GCSE results have yet to be released but provisional results suggest that there is decrease from 2004.

In 2004, 54.5 per cent. of pupils in Brent schools achieved five or more A*-C passes in GCSE or equivalent examinations, this compares with national average of 52 per cent.. Provisional results for 2005 at LEA level will be published on 20 October, with final figures and school-level results following in January 2006.

Essex Pupils

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Essex pupils were educated out of county in each of the last seven years. [18794]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested has been provided in the following table.

The number and percentages of pupils living within Essex that are educated out of the county from 2002-05 at (a) primary, (b) secondary and (c) special schools

	Total pupils resident in Essex	*Number of pupils resident in Essex educated outside of the authority*	*Percentage of pupils resident in Essex educated outside of the authority*
2005	202,883	8,554	4.2
2004	203,408	8,458	4.2
2003	203,005	8,408	4.1
2002	201,712	8,043	4.0

	Resident pupils in Essex	*Number educated outside authority*	*Percentage educated outside authority*
Primary			
2005	108,988	1,973	1.8
2004	110,136	1,932	1.8
2003	111,048	1,930	1.7
2002	112,132	1,853	1.7
Secondary			
2005	92,010	6,379	6.9
2004	91,387	6,300	6.9
2003	90,009	6,231	6.9
2002	87,904	6,808	6.8
Special			
2005	1,879	202	10.8
2004	1,885	226	12.0
2003	1,948	247	12.7
2002	1,852	182	9.8

Source:
Annual School Census 2002-05 Final data

Examination Markers/Results

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many examiners and moderators employed to mark GCSE, AS, and A Level examination papers in 2005 were not current teachers or former teachers; and if she will make a statement. [16540]

Jacqui Smith: The exam regulators' code of practice requires that candidates' work should be marked by trained examiners with appropriate subject experience. The regulatory authorities have never specified a teaching experience requirement for examiners and markers, although the awarding bodies may set a requirement when they recruit staff. The awarding bodies responsible for GCSE and A level qualifications have assured the regulators that they followed the code of practice during the 2005 summer exam series. No data is available on the total number of markers who were not current or former teachers, though the number is believed to be very small, and any such markers would have received appropriate training and have their performance monitored. Through the exams modernisation programme, a significant number of new examiners have been recruited over the last year, tackling shortages of examiners in almost all subjects.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many A and A* grades at GCSE were achieved in each year from 1997, broken down by *(a)* type of school and *(b)* gender. [16721]

Jacqui Smith: The following table gives the figures requested.

Numbers of A and A grades achieved by students in GCSE courses, by school type and gender: 1997 to 2004*

		2004		*2003*		*2002*		*2001*	
		*A**	*A*	*A**	*A*	*A**	*A*	*A**	*A*
Maintained schools									
Comprehensive	Boys	55,582	166,846	49,387	158,959	48,835	151,897	48,576	147,499
	Girls	89,650	250,095	80,594	239,655	80,101	228,235	78,644	223,988
	Total	145,232	416,941	129,981	398,614	128,936	380,132	127,220	371,487
Selective	Boys	18,638	31,741	16,174	31,326	15,402	29,745	14,303	28,679
	Girls	24,831	37,311	22,071	36,465	21,414	35,385	19,839	34,932
	Total	43,469	69,052	38,245	67,791	36,816	65,130	34,142	63,611
Modern	Boys	727	3,677	754	3,500	707	3,301	638	3,252
	Girls	1,502	6,795	1,329	6,073	1,228	5,736	1,286	5,618
	Total	2,229	10,472	2,083	9,573	1,935	9,037	1,924	8,870
Other maintained	Boys	15	71	8	73	9	52	14	83
	Girls	15	41	15	34	12	88	15	79
	Total	30	112	23	107	21	140	29	162
Independent									
	Boys	41,433	54,448	36,254	53,366	36,037	52,538	34,047	51,922
	Girls	49,833	57,484	44,899	56,644	43,023	56,021	41,626	55,508
	Total	91,266	111,932	81,153	110,010	79,060	108,559	75,673	107,430

Numbers of A and A grades achieved by students in GCSE courses, by school type and gender: 1997 to 2004*

		2004		2003		2002		2001	
		A*	A	A*	A	A*	A	A*	A
Total	Boys	116,395	256,783	102,577	247,224	100,990	237,533	97,578	231,435
	Girls	165,831	351,726	148,908	338,871	145,778	325,465	141,410	320,125
	Total	282,226	608,509	251,485	586,095	246,768	562,998	238,988	551,560

		2000		1999		1998		1997	
		A*	A	A*	A	A*	A	A*	A
Maintained schools									
Comprehensive	Boys	43,271	140,797	41,250	136,292	38,608	128,013	37,054	126,669
	Girls	72,030	214,607	67,697	204,941	61,572	192,310	54,897	189,582
	Total	115,301	355,404	108,947	341,233	100,180	320,323	91,951	316,251
Selective	Boys	12,596	27,327	11,870	26,578	10,308	24,863	8,967	23,988
	Girls	18,419	32,848	16,404	32,060	14,663	30,202	12,006	30,222
	Total	31,015	60,175	28,274	58,638	24,971	55,065	20,973	54,210
Modern	Boys	483	2,573	399	2,286	309	1,904	289	1,844
	Girls	1,130	4,876	884	4,187	756	3,826	605	3,559
	Total	1,613	7,449	1,283	6,473	1,065	5,730	894	5,403
Other maintained	Boys	17	62	33	79	35	64	7	54
	Girls	16	65	27	61	28	63	10	67
	Total	33	127	60	140	63	127	17	121
Independent									
	Boys	30,102	50,793	30,212	50,786	26,897	51,985	25,098	52,693
	Girls	38,744	54,442	36,664	53,333	34,297	54,183	29,401	55,645
	Total	68,846	105,235	66,876	104,119	61,194	106,168	54,499	108,338
Total	Boys	86,469	221,552	83,764	216,021	76,157	206,829	71,415	205,248
	Girls	130,339	306,838	121,676	294,582	111,316	280,584	96,919	279,075
	Total	216,808	528,390	205,440	510,603	187,473	487,413	168,334	484,323

Excellent Schools (Incentives)

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what incentives her Department gives to schools achieving excellence. [17294]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* The Department offers incentives to schools to achieve excellence in a range of ways. Participation in the specialist schools programme rewards schools for reaching and maintaining rigorous standards. This year we have offered additional opportunities for high-performing specialist schools to take on leading roles. Other examples of how schools are recognised for their excellence include the National Healthy School Programme, which recognises schools that meet standards in four key areas supporting children's health and learning, and Artsmark, which recognises, promotes and disseminates good practice in arts education provision. The value added indicator in the Achievement and Attainment tables is also an important way of recognising the progress that pupils have made between key stages.

Extended Schools Initiative

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 2341W, on the Extended Schools Initiative, what plans she has to monitor whether *(a)* schools and *(b)* local authorities are working with the private and voluntary sector as part of the extended schools initiative; and if she will make a statement. [18873]

Beverley Hughes: The Government's vision for all schools to provide a core offer of extended services is a challenging one and our success will depend upon effective partnerships with the private and voluntary sectors. The National Remodelling Team, through its cultural change programme, is encouraging schools and local authorities to work with existing and new providers in the voluntary and private sectors and is offering support to help them do so. This close working will provide a clear understanding of the role of such organisations in providing extended services at the local and national level. The monitoring strategy we are developing with the NRT will also look at the involvement of the private and voluntary sector in developing extended services.

Foreign Languages

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will take steps to encourage foreign language learning in schools in England; and if she will make a statement. [17525]

Jacqui Smith: In March 2005 the Secretary of State for Education and Skills announced a £115 million "Boost for Modern Foreign Languages", providing support for language teaching and learning for this and the next 2 years.

For primary schools the funding will provide continuing support for initial and existing teacher training as well as training for support staff. To date we have trained 1,200 new primary teachers with a specialism in languages. Next month we will publish in hard copy and online our Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages, which sets out learning objectives for the four years of Key Stage 2. It will be supported by training, guidance and a planning tool.

The funding will support new approaches for teaching and learning for 11–18 year olds, including alternative qualifications and vocational options at Key Stage 4 which will provide more flexibility for pupils in their studies. We have expanded the list of qualifications that count towards performance table scores to include more language qualifications.

The funding will also allow language colleges to extend the role they play in supporting local primary and secondary schools in delivering language programmes. Last month the new languages recognition scheme, the Languages Ladder, became available nationally. The scheme can be used by learners of all ages and is available in eight languages. The scheme differs from existing approaches to assessment in that there are separate qualifications in each language for reading, writing, listening and speaking. To date more than 250 centres—including Local Authorities and Specialist Language Colleges—have registered to take part in the scheme.

Finally, our Key Stage 3 Strategy continues to impact positively on pupils' attainment in languages, especially boys.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the effect of making the teaching of languages in Key Stage 4 optional; and if she will make a statement. [18582]

Jacqui Smith: The decision to make languages at Key Stage 4 an entitlement subject from September 2004 was taken following national consultation on the 14–19 'extending opportunities, raising standards' Green Paper in 2002. Since that date, no further research has been commissioned by the Department. However, research undertaken by CILT—The National Centre for Languages in 2004 showed that 30 per cent. of state schools maintained languages as a compulsory subject at age 14, in addition to the 224 Specialist Language Colleges where languages are a compulsory subject.

In March 2005 the Secretary of State for Education and Skills announced £115 million "Boost for Modern Foreign Languages", providing support for language teaching and learning for this and the next two years. This funding will support new approaches for teaching and learning for 11 to 18-year-olds, including alternative qualifications and vocational options at Key Stage 4 which will provide more flexibility for pupils in their studies. We have also expanded the list of qualifications that count towards performance table scores to include more language qualifications.

Foster Care

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much a foster family in London received for each child fostered in each of the last five years. [18104]

Maria Eagle: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my hon. Friend the Minister for Children, Young People and Families on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2688W.

Home Economics

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many *(a)* boys and *(b)* girls studied home economics at GCSE in 2004; [17953]

(2) how many and what proportion of pupils studied home economics at GCSE in 2004. [17954]

Jacqui Smith: The number and proportion of pupils who attempted home economics at GCSE in 2004, broken down by gender are as follows:

Gender	*Number of 15-year-old pupils who took home economics*	*Percentage of 15-year-old pupils who took home economics*
Boys	1,700	1
Girls	32,300	10
Total	34,000	5

International Baccalaureate

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 352W, on the International Baccalaureate, if she will list the schools with at least one pupil following an International Baccalaureate. [18858]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Schools with at least one pupil following an international baccalaureate—January 2005

LEA name	*Lea number*	*Estab*	*School name*
Maintained secondary schools:			
Greenwich	203	4271	Crown Woods School
Lewisham	209	4204	Sydenham School
Bexley	303	4000	Bexley Grammar School
Birmingham	330	4057	Lordswood Boys' School
Birmingham	330	4804	Archbishop Ilsley Catholic School
Birmingham	330	5412	George Dixon International School and Sixth Form Centre
Coventry	331	4033	Tile Hill Wood School and Language College
Walsall	335	4100	Darlaston Community Science College
Wolverhampton	336	4139	Moreton Community School
Liverpool	341	4425	Broadgreen High School a Technology College
Liverpool	341	4428	New Heys Comprehensive School
Rotherham	372	4022	Dinnington Comprehensive School
Bradford	380	4612	Yorkshire Martyrs Catholic College
Wakefield	384	4024	Outwood Grange College

Schools with at least one pupil following an international baccalaureate—January 2005

LEA name	*Lea number*	*Estab*	*School name*
Newcastle upon Tyne	391	4498	West Gate Community College
Bedfordshire	820	4078	Sandy Upper School and Community College
Leicestershire	855	4033	Guthlaxton College
Leicestershire	855	4045	The Beauchamp College
Slough	871	5408	Slough Grammar School
Wokingham	872	4060	Waingels College
Cambridgeshire	873	4004	Impington Village College
Peterborough	874	5407	Deacon's School
Cheshire	875	4149	Christleton High School
Essex	881	5442	Anglo European School
Kent	886	4522	Maidstone Grammar School
Kent	886	5406	Dartford Grammar School
Kent	886	5411	Dartford Grammar School for Girls
Kent	886	5443	Tonbridge Grammar School
Hertfordshire	919	5415	Goffs School
Hertfordshire	919	5427	Hockerill Anglo-European College
Northamptonshire	928	4052	Prince William School
Surrey	936	4468	Kings International College for Business and the Arts
Surrey	936	4509	Kings College for the Arts and Technology
Warwickshire	937	4192	Campion School and Community College
City Technology Colleges and Academies:			
Solihull	334	6900	The City Technology College
Bexley	303	6905	The Business Academy Bexley

Source:
Annual Schools' Census.

Key Stage Tests

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to review the food technology content of the national curriculum at key stages 1, 2 and 3. [17952]

Jacqui Smith: The Secretary of State has asked the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to review key stage 3 of the national curriculum. Food technology is part of the design and technology curriculum and is included in this review. There are no plans to review design and technology at key stages 1 and 2.

Learning and Skills Council

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Level 3 student places were funded by the Learning and Skills Council in 2004–05; and how many Level 3 students there were in further education colleges in 2004–05. [19348]

Bill Rammell: Learner numbers for the academic year 2004/05 are not yet available. The following table shows the number of learners for the academic year 2003/04, including totals for the subset funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), versus all learners in Further Education (FE) provision:

Numbers: (000s)

2003/04	*LSC funded*	*All learners*
Level 1 and entry	1,611.5	1,748.1
Level 2	1,037.0	1,111.1
Level 3	837.4	882.9
Level 4, 5 and HE	72.6	142.7
Level not specified	555.7	752.0
Total	4,114.2	4,636.7

Nutrition

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make it her policy to make nutrition a mandatory element of the food preparation and cooking national vocational qualification. [18649]

Jacqui Smith: Qualifications relating to food preparation and cooking are developed in response to employers needs, and at this point most employers do not want nutrition as a mandatory element, although such a unit is currently available as an option. However, our recent work on improving school meals has shown that it is essential that all school catering staff have the training they need to be able to provide healthy meals for school children. That is why we worked with People 1st (the Sector Skills Council for the hospitality industry) and the Food Standards Agency to develop a level 1 vocationally related qualification in providing a healthier school meals service. The aim of the VRQ is to give school cooks and caterers the basic knowledge and skills to deliver a healthier meals service. It has been specifically designed for staff involved in the preparation and service of school meals. It will enable school caterers to improve pupil nutritional intake from all food provided by the school meals service and know how to market and promote healthier choices to pupils.

Reading and Literacy

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the impact of the participation rate of schools in England on the effectiveness of the progress in the International Reading and Literacy Study. [17188]

Jacqui Smith: The target school participation rate for the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), established by the study organisers, the

International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), was 85 per cent. England achieved 87 per cent. and its data were fully reported in the international report.

Safe Driving

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will introduce the teaching of safe driving in schools. [17174]

Jacqui Smith: The Government's non-statutory framework for personal, social and health education includes teaching about becoming safe and responsible road users. We have issued guidance to schools on how safety education can be delivered through the formal and informal curriculum. At present, the Government have no further plans to introduce measures to improve the teaching of safe driving in schools.

School Budgets

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will extend the three year limit on school budgets for the accumulation of capital funds for school building projects. [17104]

Jacqui Smith: Devolved formula capital is allocated by national formula to all maintained schools in England so that they can invest in their local priorities. This year, a typical primary school receives over £25,000 and a typical secondary school receives over £87,000. By 2007–08, these amounts increase to £34,000 and £113,000 respectively. Guidance on this funding allows schools to roll over this funding for up to three years to enable larger projects to be funded. I do not intend to extend this roll-over period. We should not deliver money too far ahead of use. Where schools have priority needs which exceed their three year allocations, they should approach their local authority for additional funding from the capital of over £2 billion each year which we provide. In these times of high construction inflation, investment should be made as early as possible. This will also mean that children will benefit as early as possible from the investment.

School Closures

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance her Department has given to local education authorities considering school closures because of falling numbers. [18776]

Jacqui Smith: Many local authorities are facing a decline in their primary school population. Working with local authorities and other partners the Department and the Audit Commission have jointly developed a toolkit which offers practical advice to help local authorities and schools tackle the challenges and make use of the opportunities presented by falling primary rolls. The toolkit is available at www.teachernet.gov.uk/falling rolls.

When falling rolls lead to empty school places closing schools is not the only option. The toolkit gives advice on a range of options from reorganisation of school places, including school closures; amalgamations and federations; and extended schools.

School Curriculum

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate her Department has made of the proportion of primary schools that teach one hour a week or more in *(a)* design and technology, *(b)* history, *(c)* geography, *(d)* art, *(e)* music, *(f)* personal, social and health education and *(g)* a modern language. [18110]

Jacqui Smith: This information is not held centrally.

Primary schools are required to deliver the national curriculum programmes of study in design and technology, history, art and design and music. They are also encouraged to deliver PSHE and modern foreign languages. Schools are free to determine how much time to spend on each curriculum area (the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority has published non-statutory guidance for schools on allocating curriculum time).

Research carried out for the DFES in 2002/03 showed that 44 per cent. of schools teaching key stage 2 pupils (ages 7–11) offered some form of language learning, including extra-curricular classes. That research also highlighted that approximately 3 per cent. of schools were offering language learning programmes within curriculum time to all year groups in key stage 2 for more than 20 minutes a week. A copy of the research is available at:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/programmeofresearch/projectinformation.cfm?projectId=13883&keyword=RR572&keywordlist1=0&keywordlist2=0&keywordlist3=0&andor=or&type=5&resultspage=1

School Meals

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of children eligible for free school meals did not take up their entitlement in the last period for which figures are available, broken down by local education authority. [16584]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested has been placed in the Libraries.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her estimate is of the cost of implementing the recommendations of the School Meals Review Panel *(a)* initially and *(b)* annually thereafter, broken down by costs associated with (i) food ingredients, (ii) refurbishment costs, (iii) catering staff training costs and (iv) catering staff costs. [17766]

Jacqui Smith: The Government are currently consulting on proposals to improve nutritional standards in schools. As part of its final report, "Turning the Tables: Transforming School Food", the School Meals Review Panel offered an assessment of the additional costs of implementing its recommendations over a three-year transition period. The figures offered are estimates and should be regarded with due caution.

Government are investing £220 million over three years to help schools and local authorities transform school meals through training and increased hours for cooks, equipment and a minimum spend on ingredients. The Panel discovered that the school meals market is currently operating very nearly at our suggested

minimum levels of ingredient costs, and is well on the way to meeting the Caroline Walker Trust recommendations for minimum spend.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will revise Ofsted inspection criteria to include monitoring of school meals food and nutrition standards. [18688]

Beverley Hughes: The Education Act 2005 extended the statutory purposes for school inspection to include the requirement to inspect and report on the contribution made by the school to the well-being of pupils. Within these provisions which came into effect in September, Ofsted looks at school meals as part of the being healthy strand of well-being. The starting point for this is the evidence provided in the school's self evaluation form. Ofsted will expect schools to present evidence about their general approach to food and healthy eating within the school as well as more specifically about the standard of school meals. Reports will highlight particular strengths and areas of concern.

In addition, Ofsted will undertake an initial thematic study this autumn covering a small sample of schools and LEAs which is intended to look in more detail at school meals and nutritional standards. The Department is working with the Department of Health, Food Standards Agency and Ofsted on the requirements for this review. This is expected to lead to a more detailed study the following year to coincide with the planned implementation of the new nutritional standards.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will review the length of the lunch break in *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools to take account of the recommendations of the School Meals Review Panel. [18689]

Jacqui Smith: The Department does not prescribe how long schools should take for their lunch break. There are no current plans to change this arrangement. We will consider the implications of the consultation responses to the School Meals Review Panel's recommendations in due course.

School Refurbishment

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on *(a)* repairing and *(b)* rebuilding schools in Pudsey in each year since 1992. [18935]

Jacqui Smith: Capital funding is provided to local authorities and schools through formulaic programmes targeted to need. This is available to modernise facilities, provide more places, reorganise schools and improve access for disabled pupils. Devolved formula capital is allocated to all maintained schools in England. This funding enables schools to tackle repairs, maintain buildings and invest in ICT. We do not keep central records on how this money is spent, so it is not possible to distinguish between expenditure on repairs and rebuilding.

Capital allocations are not made direct to Pudsey, but to the City of Leeds local authority and schools in its area. Allocations made since 1996 are shown in the following table.

£ million

	Capital allocations
1996–97	8.7
1997–98	9.2
1998–99	10.4
1999–2000	13.2
2000–01	28.9
2001–02	22.7
2002–03	32.8
2003–04	28.3
2004–05	31.7
2005–06	23.3

Notes:
1. Figures exclude £193.4 million of PFI Credits provided for the Leeds 2 PFI project. Four Pudsey schools are included in this PFI project.
2. Data is not available centrally before 1996–97.

School Uniforms

Mary Creagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of local education authorities provide financial assistance for the purchase of school uniforms. [17806]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* The Department does not collect this information.

Mary Creagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress has been made on taking forward the recommendation of the Work and Pensions Select Committee that resources should be earmarked to enable local education authorities to provide school uniform grants. [17807]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 14 October 2005]*: The response to the Work and Pensions Select Committee report stated that this Government do not believe that funding should be earmarked for providing school clothing, because local authorities (LAs) already have discretionary powers to provide school clothing grants. We think that individual LAs are best placed to determine the level of need in their area.

Department for Education and Skills guidance to schools advises that governing bodies should give high priority to cost considerations when they set their school uniform policy, and should keep costs to a minimum by, for example, ensuring that uniform can be purchased from more than one supplier. It also states that no school uniform should be so expensive as to leave pupils or their families feeling socially excluded.

Schools' Capital Funding

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much capital funding was available to *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in each year from 2001–02. [18937]

Jacqui Smith: Capital funding is provided to local authorities and schools through formulaic programmes targeted to need, so that they can address local priorities. It is the responsibility of local authorities to allocate funds throughout their school estate in a way that promotes fair investment and ensures best value for money. We do not keep central records on how local authorities allocate the funds across their primary and secondary school estates. In addition devolved formula capital is allocated directly to all maintained schools in

England, to use for their individual priorities. This year, a typical primary school receives £25,000 and a typical secondary school receives over £87,000. By 2007–08, these amounts increase to £34,000 and £113,000 respectively.

The total capital funding available to schools since 2001–02 is shown as follows:

£ billion

	Capital allocations
2001–02	2.5
2002–03	3.3
2003–04	4.1
2004–05	4.8
2005–06	5.5

Science Education

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the outcome of the pilot project carried out by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority introducing Twenty-First Century Science and Science for the Citizen; and how much the project cost. [16665]

Jacqui Smith: Early indications from the pilot are that it has had a very positive effect and a new programme of study for science at Key Stage 4 will be introduced in schools in September 2006. It will maintain the breadth, depth and challenge of the current curriculum, while catering for a wide range of students' interests and aptitudes and encouraging more students to study more science. The cost of running the pilot project was £81,340.

Second World War

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will take steps to encourage the teaching of the history of the Second World War in schools in England; and if she will make a statement. [17527]

Jacqui Smith: The Second World and the Holocaust are both statutory elements of the Key Stage 3 (11 to 14-year-olds) history curriculum. In addition at Key Stage 2 (7 to 11-year-olds), pupils have the option to study Britain since 1930, specifically the impact of the Second World War. Modern European and world history, including the study of the Second World War, is a popular choice at GCSE and A Level.

Over the last 18 months the Department has worked with the Ministry of Defence to ensure that key messages surrounding the 60th anniversary commemorations of the end of the Second World War were delivered to schools and to ensure that schools and young people were included as part of the planning and organisation for events.

The Department also assisted in the development of the 'Their Past, Your Future' programme managed by the Imperial War Museum and funded by the Big Lottery Fund. That programme has provided opportunities for schools to visit Second World War sites with veterans and create school resources.

SEN

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of pupils with special educational needs *(a)* with statements and *(b)* without statements were taught in each category of school, including faith schools, in each of the last five years. [16859]

Jacqui Smith: Tables 1a and 1b show the number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) with statements and SEN pupils without statements for each school category.

Tables 2a and 2b show the number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) with statements and SEN pupils without statements for maintained primary and secondary schools broken down by religious character. This information is not available for other school types.

Table 1a: Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs (SEN) by type of school—2001–05

Position in January each year—England

	2001 [6]	*2002* [7]	*2003* [7]	*2004* [7]	*2005* [7]
All schools					
Pupils with statements	258,200	248,980	250,550	247,590	242,580
Pupils on roll	8,374,100	8,369,080	8,366,780	8,334,880	8,274,470
Incidence (%) [1]	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
Maintained schools					
Nursery					
Pupils with statements	600	550	550	460	410
Pupils on roll	45,000	42,370	40,480	38,970	37,410
Incidence (%) [1]	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.1
Placement (%) [2]	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Primary					
Pupils with statements	75,300	70,730	71,040	69,610	67,380
Pupils on roll	4,406,200	4,363,340	4,309,030	4,252,540	4,204,500
Incidence (%) [1]	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6
Placement (%) [2]	29.1	28.4	28.4	28.1	27.8
Secondary					
Pupils with statements	82,100	78,610	79,320	78,480	76,580
Pupils on roll	3,231,800	3,264,090	3,308,030	3,324,950	3,316,050
Incidence (%) [1]	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.3
Placement (%) [2]	31.8	31.6	31.7	31.7	31.6

Table 1a: Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs (SEN) by type of school—2001–05
Position in January each year—England

	2001 [6]	2002 [7]	2003 [7]	2004 [7]	2005 [7]
Special [3,4]					
Pupils with statements	87,400	85,800	85,800	84,250	83,290
Pupils on roll	91,000	89,800	88,930	86,930	85,500
Incidence (%) [1]	96.1	95.6	96.5	96.9	97.4
Placement (%) [2]	33.9	34.5	34.2	34.0	34.3
Pupil Referral Units [4]					
Pupils with statements	1,800	1,840	2,010	2,300	2,260
Pupils on roll	9,300	9,960	12,010	13,040	14,470
Incidence (%) [1]	19.4	18.5	16.8	17.6	15.6
Placement (%) [2]	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.9
Other schools					
Independent [5]					
Pupils with statements	6,600	6,970	6,990	7,800	7,930
Pupils on roll	586,200	594,860	603,340	613,620	611,670
Incidence (%) [1]	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.3
Placement (%) [2]	2.6	2.8	2.8	3.1	3.3
Non-maintained special [4]					
Pupils with statements	4,500	4,490	4,840	4,700	4,740
Pupils on roll	4,600	4,670	4,950	4,840	4,870
Incidence (%) [1]	96.1	96.0	97.8	97.2	97.3
Placement (%) [2]	1.7	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.0

[1] Incidence of pupils—the number of pupils with statements expressed as a proportion of the number of pupils on roll.
[2] Placement of pupils—the number of pupils with statements expressed as a proportion of the number of pupils with statements in all schools.
[3] Including general and special hospital schools.
[4] Excluding dually registered pupils.
[5] Including Direct Grant Nursery Schools and City Technology Colleges and Academies from 2003.
[6] Estimates were made for January 2001 because the data for SEN are known to be incomplete.
[7] From 2002 data may not be comparable with previous years.
Note:
Totals may not appear to equal the sum of the component parts because numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
Annual Schools Census

Table 1b: Number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) without statements by type of school—2001–05
Position in January each year—England

	2001 [7]	2002 [8]	2003 [8]	2004 [8]	2005 [8]
All schools [1]					
Pupils with SEN without statements	1,566,160	1,402,000	1,169,780	1,197,490	1,230,800
Pupils on roll	8,374,100	8,364,220	8,366,560	8,334,680	8,274,320
Incidence (%) [2]	18.6	16.8	14.0	14.4	14.9
Maintained schools					
Nursery					
Pupils with SEN without statements	5,340	4,940	4,460	4,270	4,110
Pupils on roll	45,000	42,370	40,480	38,970	37,410
Incidence (%) [2]	11.9	11.7	11.0	11.0	11.0
Placement (%) [3]	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3
Primary					
Pupils with SEN without statements	927,000	834,140	685,100	685,700	692,480
Pupils on roll	4,406,200	4,363,340	4,309,030	4,252,540	4,204,500
Incidence (%) [2]	21.0	19.1	15.9	16.1	16.5
Placement (%) [3]	59.6	59.6	58.6	57.3	56.3
Secondary					
Pupils with SEN without statements	586,300	519,120	430,080	450,120	473,510
Pupils on roll	3,231,800	3,264,090	3,308,030	3,324,950	3,316,050
Incidence (%) [2]	18.1	15.9	13.0	13.5	14.3
Placement (%) [3]	37.7	37.1	36.8	37.6	38.5
Special [1,4]					
Pupils with SEN without statements	[9]—	2,410	1,890	1,800	1,750
Pupils on roll	[9]—	89,600	88,720	86,730	85,350
Incidence (%) [2]	[9]—	2.7	2.1	2.1	2.1
Placement (%) [3]	[9]—	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1
Pupil Referral Units [4,5]					
Pupils with SEN without statements	4,768	4,940	5,600	6,440	6,540
Pupils on roll	9,300	9,960	12,010	13,040	14,470
Incidence (%) [2]	51.3	49.6	46.7	49.4	45.2
Placement (%) [3]	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5

Table 1b: Number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) without statements by type of school—2001-05

Position in January each year—England

	2001 [7]	2002 [8]	2003 [8]	2004 [8]	2005 [8]
Other schools					
Independent [6]					
Pupils with SEN without statements	32,750	36,450	42,610	49,140	52,370
Pupils on roll	586,200	594,860	603,340	613,620	611,670
Incidence (%) [2]	5.6	6.1	7.1	8.0	8.6
Placement (%) [3]	2.1	2.6	3.6	4.1	4.3
Non-maintained special [4]					
Pupils with SEN without statements	[9]—	[9]—	40	30	40
Pupils on roll	[9]—	[9]—	4,950	4,840	4,870
Incidence (%) [2]	[9]—	[9]—	0.7	0.5	0.8
Placement (%) [3]	[9]—	[9]—	0.0	0.0	0.0

[1] Excludes general hospital schools. Data for pupils with SEN without statements is not collected from these schools.
[2] Incidence of pupils—the number of pupils with SEN without statements expressed as a proportion of pupils on roll.
[3] Placement of pupils—the number of pupils with SEN without statements expressed as a proportion of pupils with SEN without statements in all schools.
[4] Excludes dually registered pupils.
[5] Includes pupils with other providers.
[6] Including Direct Grant Nursery schools, City Technology Colleges and Academies from 2003.
[7] Estimates were made for January 2001 because the data for SEN are known to be incomplete.
[8] From 2002 data may not be comparable with previous years.
[9] Not available.

Note:
Totals may not appear to equal the sum of the component parts because numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
Annual Schools Census

Table 2a: Maintained primary schools: Number and percentage of pupils with special educational needs by the religious character of the school

Position as at January each year—England

	2001 [2]				2002 [3]				2003 [3]			
	pupils with a statement		*SEN pupils without a statement*		*pupils with a statement*		*SEN pupils without a statement*		*pupils with a statement*		*SEN pupils without a statement*	
	Number	*%* [4]	*Number*	*%* [4]	*Number*	*%* [4]	*Number*	*%* [4]	*Number*	*%* [4]	*Number*	*%* [4]
No religious character	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	53,860	1.7	623,040	19.8	53,860	1.7	510,250	16.5
Church of England	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	11,660	1.5	137,530	17.5	11,890	1.5	113,910	14.5
Roman Catholic	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	4,880	1.2	69,670	16.8	4,920	1.2	57,250	14.0
Methodist	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	100	1.9	880	17.4	80	1.8	670	15.2
Other Christian Faith (5)	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	110	1.3	1,500	17.1	170	1.6	1,490	14.6
Jewish	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	110	1.4	1,420	17.1	120	1.5	1,330	17.2
Muslim	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	[7]—	1.2	40	11.3	20	1.9	140	14.6
Sikh	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	0	0.0	40	18.8	0	0.0	40	19.3
Other	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	0	0.0	30	20.3	0	0.0	10	12.1
Total	75,300	1.7	927,000	21.0	70,730	1.6	834,140	19.1	71,040	1.6	685,100	15.9

Maintained primary schools [1]

	2004 [3]				2005 [3]			
	Pupils with a statement		*SEN pupils without a statement*		*Pupils with a statement*		*SEN pupils without a statement*	
	Number	*%* [4]	*Number*	*%* [4]	*Number*	*%* [4]	*Number*	*%* [4]
No religious character	52,510	1.7	510,930	16.8	50,700	1.7	516,820	17.2
Church of England	11,780	1.5	113,850	14.8	11,380	1.5	114,160	14.7
Roman Catholic	4,940	1.2	57,570	14.1	4,920	1.2	58,220	14.4
Methodist	80	1.8	710	15.6	80	1.8	690	15.1
Other Christian Faith [5]	160	1.7	1,330	14.0	150	1.6	1,330	13.8
Jewish	140	1.7	1,200	14.2	140	1.6	1,090	12.6
Muslim	10	1.2	40	9.5	10	1.0	90	11.5
Sikh	[7]—	0.5	30	14.8	[7]—	0.9	20	11.3
Other	[7]—	0.5	40	21.1	0	0.0	50	21.2
Total	69,610	1.6	685,700	16.1	67,380	1.6	692,480	16.5

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Estimates were made at National level for 2001 because the data for SEN are known to be incomplete. Therefore it is not possible to provide a breakdown by religious character.
[3] Figures for SEN pupils without statements are not directly comparable with those for earlier years.
[4] The number of pupils with SEN expressed as a percentage of the number of pupils on roll.
[5] Includes schools of mixed denomination or other Christian beliefs.
[6] Not available
[7] Less than 5 pupils

Note:
Totals may not appear to equal the sum of the component parts because numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Table 2b: Maintained secondary schools: Number and percentage of pupils with special educational needs by the religious character of the school

Position as at January each year—England

	2001 [2]				2002 [3]				2003 [3]			
	Pupils with a statement		SEN pupils without a statement		Pupils with a statement		SEN pupils without a statement		Pupils with a statement		SEN pupils without a statement	
	Number	%[4]	Number	%[4]	Number	%[4]	Number	%[4]	Number	%[4]	Number	%[4]
No religious character	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	69,130	2.5	449,740	16.3	69,470	2.5	372,720	13.3
Church of England	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	3,240	2.1	23,380	14.9	3,420	2.1	18,550	11.6
Roman Catholic	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	5,730	1.8	42,840	13.6	5,940	1.8	36,020	11.2
Methodist	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	0	0.0	0	0.0	[7]—	1.6	60	34.6
Other Christian Faith (5)	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	410	1.7	2,170	8.9	380	1.6	1,830	7.6
Jewish	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	90	1.8	840	17.4	100	1.5	780	11.7
Muslim	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	0.2	40	7.4	10	1.2	30	5.0
Sikh	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	0	0.0	40	13.7	[7]—	0.3	30	8.3
Other	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	10	1.6	70	24.1	0	0.0	70	24.1
Total	82,100	2.5	586,300	18.1	78,610	2.4	519,120	15.9	79,320	2.4	430,080	13.0

Maintained secondary schools [1]

	2004 [3]				2005 [3]			
	Pupils with a statement		SEN pupils without a statement		Pupils with a statement		SEN pupils without a statement	
	Number	%[4]	Number	%[4]	Number	%[4]	Number	%[4]
No religious character	68,430	2.4	389,950	13.9	66,400	2.4	410,050	14.7
Church of England	3,490	2.1	19,940	12.1	3,680	2.2	21,060	12.5
Roman Catholic	6,030	1.9	37,620	11.7	5,940	1.9	39,480	12.3
Methodist	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other Christian Faith [5]	430	1.6	1,970	7.3	450	1.7	2,280	8.3
Jewish	90	1.9	510	10.3	100	1.8	520	9.5
Muslim	10	0.8	50	7.2	10	0.9	70	9.3
Sikh	[7]—	0.5	20	5.4	[7]—	0.9	[7]—	0.2
Other	[7]—	0.3	60	19.2	10	4.1	40	13.7
Total	78,480	2.4	450,120	13.5	76,580	2.3	473,510	14.3

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Estimates were made at National level for 2001 because the data for SEN are known to be incomplete. Therefore it is not possible to provide a breakdown by religious character.
[3] Figures for SEN pupils without statements are not directly comparable with those for earlier years.
[4] The number of pupils with SEN expressed as a percentage of the number of pupils on roll.
[5] Includes schools of mixed denomination or other Christian beliefs.
[6] Not available.
[7] Less than 5 pupils.
Note:
Totals may not appear to equal the sum of the component parts because numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Single Parent University Students

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what child care support services for single parent university students receive public *(a)* funding and *(b)* support; and what estimate she has made of the percentage of single parent university students who have access to adequate child care services. [18400]

Bill Rammell: Information on university child care support services is not collected centrally. HE institutions are free to manage their own affairs and decide which student services they need to provide for their students, how best to deliver them and the level of resource they allocate to them from within the public funds they receive.

The Government provide generous child care grants for eligible single parent university students worth 85 per cent. of total costs; and we have recently raised the ceiling on these costs from £200 to £300 per week (with grants up to £255 per week). This enables the student to choose the child care provision most suitable for them, whether made available by universities or otherwise.

SEN (Tooting)

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding has been allocated to special needs education provision in the constituency of Tooting since 1997. [18118]

Maria Eagle: The information requested is not held by the Department in this form.

The constituency of Tooting falls within the area of Wandsworth local authority and the following table shows budgeted SEN expenditure in Wandsworth for the years 2000–01 to 2005–06.

The Education (Budget Statements) (England) Regulations. Budgeted net expenditure on the provision of education for children with special educational needs[1,2] by Wandsworth local authority[3] since 2000–01
Cash terms figures[4] as reported by Wandsworth local authority[3] as at 12 October 2005

£

	Budgeted net expenditure on the provision of education for children with special educational needs
2000–01	17,511,000
2001–02	18,312,000
2002–03	18,815,000
2003–04	19,980,000
2004–05	25,704,000
2005–06[5]	27,833,000

[1] Includes planned expenditure on the provision for pupils with statements and the provision for non-statemented pupils with SEN, support for inclusion, inter authority recoupment, fees for pupils at independent special schools and abroad, educational psychology service, local authority functions in relation to child protection, therapies and other health related services, parent partnership, guidance and information, the monitoring of SEN provision and inclusion administration, assessment and co-ordination. Also included is the funding delegated to nursery, primary and secondary schools identified as "notional SEN" and the individual schools budget (ISB) for special schools.
[2] The ISB for special schools will include some general education costs for pupils with SEN in addition to those costs specifically for SEN while the figures recorded against "notional SEN" are only indicative of the amount that might be spent by schools on SEN and, from 2004–05 onwards, "notional SEN" delegated to nursery schools was reported on Section 52 for the first time and this accounts for £31,000 and £72,000 of the 2004–05 and 2005–06 totals respectively, in 2005–06, Wandsworth also budgeted £4.9 million for SEN transport expenditure but this is not included in the above table as figures are not available prior to 2005–06.
[3] Financial data is collected at a local authority level and consequently figures for the constituency of Tooting are not available and have been replaced by figures for Wandsworth local authority.
[4] Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand pounds.
[5] 2005–06 data is provisional and is subject to change by the local authority.
Source:
The data is drawn from Wandsworth local authority's Section 52 Budget Statements (Tables 1 and 2) submitted to the DfES.
Data is not available prior to 2000–01.

Sports Colleges

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if she will take steps to ensure that all designated sports colleges have a sports hall; [17106]

(2) how many secondary schools have been designated as sports colleges; and how many of these do not have their own sports hall. [17107]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* There are currently 351 designated specialist sports colleges in operation. This includes 334 schools with sport as the sole specialism; 10 schools with sport combined with another specialism; and seven schools with sport as a second specialism.

The Department does not collect detailed data on the number of sports colleges which have their own sports hall. However, a survey of 168 sports colleges carried out by the Youth Sport Trust this summer showed that 77 per cent. of sports colleges had their own purpose built sports hall on site.

While it may be desirable, it is not always necessary or appropriate for every sports college to have its own purpose built sports hall on site. Specialist sports colleges should have, or have access to, a range of high quality facilities for PE and sport that is appropriate to the needs of: their pupils; pupils in their partner schools; and other users in the wider community.

Any perceived need for a sports hall should have been highlighted in the school's audit which it will have carried out as part of its application for sports college status. This should have been reflected in the school's sports college capital project plans. Sports colleges could consider using their capital grant to contribute towards the cost of a sports hall.

Building Schools for the Future aims to renew all secondary schools in England over the next 15 years. When developing their proposals for BSF investment, planners should ensure that specialist sports colleges with a perceived need for a sports hall are catered for appropriately.

Student Finance

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of university courses she expects will cost the full £3,000 per year fee when the new funding arrangements come into effect in 2006. [17815]

Bill Rammell: Universities are already and will continue to be free to charge unregulated fees for about half of the total number of courses they provide. For the other half, all but four universities plan to charge the full tuition fee of £3,000, but there will be no net cost in respect of tuition fees to any students from low income backgrounds at any university since in addition to the non-repayable grant of £2,700 we are making available, there is a minimum requirement for institutions to provide a bursary, or equivalent, of at least £300. However, most institutions have been significantly more generous than that with bursaries of up to £3,000, and in some exceptional cases up to £5,700.

Sure Start

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much has been spent by her Department on evaluating the effectiveness of Sure Start schemes. [18839]

Beverley Hughes: A comprehensive national level evaluation of Sure Start Local Programmes (SSLPs) is examining the implementation, cost-effectiveness and impact of Sure Start for children, families and communities. It also provides support to SSLPs on their local evaluations.

The National Evaluation runs from 2001 to 2008 and will cost £20.3 million in total.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how much funding has been made available for the creation of children's centres; [18994]

(2) how much has been allocated to Sure Start projects in West Sussex; [18995]

(3) if she will list Sure Start projects which are running in West Sussex; and where new ones are planned. [18996]

Beverley Hughes: For the first phase of Sure Start Children's Centres from 2004–06 we have made available £435 million to develop children's centre services in disadvantaged areas. For the second phase from 2006–08 we are starting to roll out children's centres across the rest of the country and are making available £947 million so that we reach our target of 2,500 centres by March 2008.

Two Sure Start Local Programmes (SSLPs) were announced in West Sussex in 2002–03 (wave 5): Crawley and Littlehampton. Crawley SSLP received an allocation of £1.1 million in capital and revenue of £768,750 in 2005–06. Littlehampton SSLP received an allocation of £1,392,485 in capital and revenue of £729,800 in 2005–06.

For phase 1 of children's centres, Crawley SSLP developed into Broadfield and Bewbush children's centres and Littlehampton SSLP became Littlehampton Children's Centre in 2005, all serving the 20 per cent. most disadvantaged wards in West Sussex. In addition to these, three other children's centres have been designated in West Sussex and are now working towards achieving the full core offer of services. These are Bognor, Worthing and Chichester. In total, £650,000 capital and £389,000 revenue has been allocated to support the development of these centres in addition to the existing SSLP funding. We also provided a rural uplift element for West Sussex of £40,000 revenue and 100,000 capital for spending on the development of children's centre services in rural areas in the county.

For phase 2, West Sussex has a target to deliver 30 new children's centres. The total Sure Start specific grant allocation for these centres is £5,478,575 capital and £4,563,728 revenue. The local authority is currently identifying areas and developing early plans to progress these centres. Many of these centres will be linked to extended schools where appropriate to local needs. West Sussex and all other local authorities are required to provide basic information on early plans and location of phase 2 children's centres by the end of November 2005. Therefore planned locations for these centres are not yet known.

Teachers

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what schemes of in-service professional development are available to teachers in maintained schools. [17436]

Jacqui Smith: Schools are free to decide on the sources of professional development for their staff. This may be from a wide variety of providers or delivered internally within schools. It is not therefore possible to maintain central records of such provision. Significant support is provided by the Government through their primary and secondary strategies.

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* classroom assistants and *(b)* teachers were employed in Pudsey in each year since 1997. [18919]

Jacqui Smith: The following table gives the full-time equivalent number of teaching assistants and teachers in service in Pudsey constituency in each January between 1997 and 2005.

Maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools, all special schools[1] and pupil referral units: Full time equivalent number of teaching and support staff—position in January each year: 1997 to 2005—Pudsey parliamentary constituency

	FTE qualified teachers	FTE other teaching staff	FTE teaching assistants	FTE other support staff
1997	830	10	150	140
1998	830	10	170	150
1999	840	0	180	150
2000	860	10	190	170
2001	880	10	200	210
2002	950	10	290	210
2003	950	10	300	210
2004	950	20	310	210
2005	930	20	310	240

[1] Includes maintained and non-maintained special schools.
Note:
Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
Annual School Census

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether her Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* sought actuarial estimates of the effect on life expectancy of increasing the retirement age of teachers by five years. [17189]

Jacqui Smith: We have not commissioned specific estimates from the Government Actuary on the impact on life expectancy of the proposal to increase to 65 the normal pension age in the Teachers' Pension Scheme. However, based on the mortality assumptions adopted by the Government Actuary for the 2001 actuarial review of the Teachers' Pension Scheme, the life expectancy of a male teacher retiring at a) age 60 is 25 years and b) age 65 it is 20 years. For female teachers, the corresponding figures are 28 years at age 60 and 23 years at age 65.

The Government Actuary will take account of any changes to the assumptions adopted for 2001 valuation as part of the current valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme. I expect to receive the Government Actuary's report early in 2006.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many entry-level vacancies for newly qualified teachers there were in schools in England in 2003–04. [16423]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is not held centrally. However vacancies in 2005 stood at 0.7 per cent. This compares to 1.4 per cent. in 2001.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the likely effect on teachers' future pension entitlements of her proposed changes from management points to teaching and learning responsibility payments. [17678]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* Individual teachers whose management allowance ceases and who do not receive a teaching and learning responsibility payment of comparable value will have their pension entitlement protected for up to five years

through a combination of salary safeguarding and the use of the best salary in the last three years for their pension calculation. Thereafter, subsequent salary progression will have mitigated the earlier loss of a management allowance.

Visual/Auditory/Kinaesthetic Learners

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what estimate she has made of the number of *(a)* visual, *(b)* auditory and *(c)* kinaesthetic learners studying in schools; [18109]

(2) what research has been funded by her Department into the efficacy of the visual-auditory-kinaesthetic learning styles model recommended on her Department's teachernet website on effective teaching. [18387]

Jacqui Smith: No estimate has been made by the Secretary of State of the number of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learners in schools. The Department has not funded any specific research into the visual-auditory-kinaesthetic learning styles model. There are many different models of learning styles.

We encourage teachers to have an understanding that there is evidence for significant differences in the way learners approach their learning, and that they can all benefit from experiencing different approaches to learning. The visual-auditory-kinaesthetic model is only a simple example of this.

Youth Services

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of 11 to 19-year-olds *(a)* engaged in more than two hours of sporting activity per week, *(b)* had access to youth groups and *(c)* were involved in volunteering in each year since 1995. [16441]

Jacqui Smith: The 2004/05 school sport survey found that, within school sport partnerships, 69 per cent. of 5 to 16-year-olds were spending at least two hours in a typical week on high quality PE and school sport, within and beyond the curriculum. This is up 7 percentage points from the 2003/04 survey. The survey, which ran for the first time in 2003/04, does not collect data for 16 to 19-year-olds.

All local authorities have a duty to provide youth services—to support the development of young people, engage them with relevant services and prepare them for the responsibilities of adulthood. The National Youth Agency audit data for 2003/04 shows that local youth services in England reached 23.5 per cent. of young people aged 13 to 19 years.

The Department does not hold annual data on young people's levels of volunteering. However, the 2001 Young People's Social Attitudes Survey found that 16 per cent. of 12 to 19-year-olds reported doing some voluntary or charity work in the previous six months (Park, Phillips and Johnson "Young people in Britain: the attitudes and experiences of 12–19 year olds" DFES 2004). The Home Office Citizenship Survey in 2003 found that 45 per cent. of 16 to 24-year-olds participate at least once a month in informal volunteering.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Arts Council

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding has been allocated by the Arts Council in Northern Ireland over the last five years, broken down by *(a)* Westminster parliamentary constituency and *(b)* district council area. [18017]

Mr. Hanson: The funding allocated by the Arts Council to each district council area over the last five years is contained in Table A.

The funding allocated by the Arts Council to each parliamentary constituency over the last five years is contained in Table B.

Figures quoted for 2005–06 reflect the funding allocated to date in the current Financial Year.

Table A: Arts Council funding by district council area

£

Local authority	*Fund*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Antrim	Exchequer	0	3,000	18,200
Antrim	Lottery	0	69,164	112,446
Ards	Exchequer	4,770	6,880	29,903
Ards	Lottery	0	103,845	104,599
Armagh	Exchequer	690	2,550	155,497
Armagh	Lottery	0	273,153	148,332
Ballymena	Exchequer	100	0	12,100
Ballymena	Lottery	0	16,544	194,695
Ballymoney	Exchequer	0	1,400	2,775
Ballymoney	Lottery	0	106,304	34,455
Banbridge	Exchequer	2,400	730	9,970
Banbridge	Lottery	0	42,557	22,158
Belfast	Exchequer	202,101	165,192	6,179,408
Belfast	Lottery	4,726,925	2,625,512	5,844,496
Carrickfergus	Exchequer	4,200	11,600	17,000
Carrickfergus	Lottery	0	39,672	5,000
Castlereagh	Exchequer	5,800	2,150	58,781
Castlereagh	Lottery	36,990	39,949	229,637
Coleraine	Exchequer	1,650	3,389	145,100
Coleraine	Lottery	1,427,516	5,244	75,794
Cookstown	Exchequer	850	6,500	0
Cookstown	Lottery	0	151,465	28,211
Craigavon	Exchequer	1,200	2,900	47,719
Craigavon	Lottery	203,384	146,646	83,137
Derry	Exchequer	14,795	41,103	659,651
Derry	Lottery	1,385,189	1,043,479	1,520,942
Down	Exchequer	15,835	33,870	63,530
Down	Lottery	127,832	172,739	60,455
Dungannon	Exchequer	10,000	10,000	14,000
Dungannon	Lottery	6,820	236,144	68,808
Fermanagh	Exchequer	10,000	2,945	84,152
Fermanagh	Lottery	49,305	98,956	71,800
Larne	Exchequer	0	1,350	12,570
Larne	Lottery	269,976	14,192	32,427
Limavady	Exchequer	0	2,430	0
Lisburn	Exchequer	9,050	21,420	102,788
Lisburn	Lottery	25,300	120,136	126,916
Magherafelt	Exchequer	10,000	0	0
Magherafelt	Lottery	0	16,156	10,712
Moyle	Exchequer	0	7,330	10,800
Moyle	Lottery	0	40,000	0
Newry and Mourne	Exchequer	8,475	18,900	141,845
Newry and Mourne	Lottery	0	466,064	77,780
Newtownabbey	Exchequer	5,120	6,350	11,780
Newtownabbey	Lottery	20,055	49,171	47,559
North Down	Exchequer	33,000	17,025	75,106
North Down	Lottery	107,847	254,128	60,940
Omagh	Exchequer	0	3,000	7,388
Omagh	Lottery	55,312	198,300	163,167
Strabane	Exchequer	960	5,600	18,200
Strabane	Lottery	48,250	768,908	58,380
Total		8,831,697	7,476,042	17,061,109

Table A: Arts Council funding by district council area

£

Local authority	Fund	2004-05	2005-06 to date	Total of award
Antrim	Exchequer	27,000	0	48,200
Antrim	Lottery	210,732	102,264	494,606
Ards	Exchequer	22,480	17,075	81,108
Ards	Lottery	37,200	61,660	307,304
Armagh	Exchequer	148,500	160,500	467,737
Armagh	Lottery	29,943	12,078	463,506
Ballymena	Exchequer	1,000	600	13,800
Ballymena	Lottery	11,441	0	222,680
Ballymoney	Exchequer	0	0	4,175
Ballymoney	Lottery	210,599	0	351,358
Banbridge	Exchequer	8,050	17,890	39,040
Banbridge	Lottery	23,853	50,890	139,458
Belfast	Exchequer	5,855,118	6,152,505	18,554,324
Belfast	Lottery	4,286,636	2,600,925	20,084,493
Carrickfergus	Exchequer	2,100	0	34,900
Carrickfergus	Lottery	9,000	0	53,672
Castlereagh	Exchequer	50,218	17,081	134,030
Castlereagh	Lottery	49,084	107,863	463,523
Coleraine	Exchequer	138,000	161,370	449,509
Coleraine	Lottery	148,003	111,293	1,767,850
Cookstown	Exchequer	25,000	30,000	62,350
Cookstown	Lottery	99,709	11,173	290,558
Craigavon	Exchequer	46,650	50,500	148,969
Craigavon	Lottery	446,950	216,427	1,069,544
Derry	Exchequer	705,748	747,131	2,168,428
Derry	Lottery	2,066,220	461,572	6,477,402
Down	Exchequer	43,119	58,125	214,479
Down	Lottery	81,830	161,754	604,610
Dungannon	Exchequer	15,220	4,700	53,920
Dungannon	Lottery	27,066	92,760	431,598
Fermanagh	Exchequer	71,474	50,255	218,826
Fermanagh	Lottery	578,879	251,094	1,050,034
Larne	Exchequer	0	300	14,430
Larne	Lottery	19,628	9,614	345,837
Limavady	Exchequer	2,500	681	5,611
Lisburn	Exchequer	94,331	90,171	307,760
Lisburn	Lottery	100,330	181,760	554,442
Magherafelt	Exchequer	0	0	10,000
Magherafelt	Lottery	14,768	0	41,636
Moyle	Exchequer	3,519	0	21,649
Moyle	Lottery	222,590	0	262,590
Newry and Mourne	Exchequer	84,500	94,750	348,470
Newry and Mourne	Lottery	65,807	34,980	644,631
Newtownabbey	Exchequer	11,291	6,449	40,990
Newtownabbey	Lottery	221,350	18,100	356,235
North Down	Exchequer	144,117	178,536	447,784
North Down	Lottery	388,374	133,665	944,954
Omagh	Exchequer	6,000	5,570	21,958
Omagh	Lottery	148,077	67,650	632,506
Strabane	Exchequer	10,000	6,477	41,237
Strabane	Lottery	337,578	154,360	1,367,476
Total		17,351,582	12,682,747	63,403,176

Table B: Arts Council funding by parliamentary constituency

£

Parliamentary constituency	Fund	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Belfast, East	Exchequer	49,439	23,625	290,466
Belfast, East	Lottery	244,475	307,915	256,157
Belfast, North	Exchequer	25,609	57,000	902,718
Belfast, North	Lottery	837,734	1,183,981	709,349
Belfast, South	Exchequer	112,068	72,067	4,050,998
Belfast, South	Lottery	2,831,405	997,865	4,548,771
Belfast, West	Exchequer	22,225	18,370	948,484
Belfast, West	Lottery	830,301	254,151	477,419
East Antrim	Exchequer	5,320	15,450	37,650
East Antrim	Lottery	290,031	53,864	84,986
East Londonderry	Exchequer	1,650	5,819	145,100
East Londonderry	Lottery	1,427,516	5,244	75,794
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	Exchequer	20,000	12,945	98,152
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	Lottery	56,125	321,409	100,785
Foyle	Exchequer	14,795	41,103	659,651
Foyle	Lottery	1,385,189	1,043,479	1,526,942

Table B: Arts Council funding by parliamentary constituency

£

Parliamentary constituency	Fund	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Lagan Valley	Exchequer	8,450	19,450	105,958
Lagan Valley	Lottery	25,300	136,309	103,586
Mid Ulster	Exchequer	10,850	6,500	0
Mid Ulster	Lottery	0	181,312	78,746
Newry and Armagh	Exchequer	6,615	19,650	281,997
Newry and Armagh	Lottery	0	529,285	198,332
North Antrim	Exchequer	100	8,730	25,675
North Antrim	Lottery	0	162,848	229,150
North Down	Exchequer	33,000	19,120	75,106
North Down	Lottery	107,847	254,128	84,708
South Antrim	Exchequer	4,000	5,100	18,300
South Antrim	Lottery	0	118,335	112,446
South Down	Exchequer	18,085	33,670	78,155
South Down	Lottery	127,832	385,859	105,747
Strangford	Exchequer	6,570	6,785	79,846
Strangford	Lottery	0	148,590	186,598
Upper Bann	Exchequer	1,200	3,630	54,419
Upper Bann	Lottery	203,384	146,646	87,783
West Tyrone	Exchequer	960	8,600	25,588
West Tyrone	Lottery	103,562	967,208	221,547
Total		8,831,697	7,476,042	17,061,109

Table B: Arts Council funding by parliamentary constituency

£

Parliamentary constituency	Fund	2004-05	2005-06 to date	Total of award
Belfast, East	Exchequer	210,286	167,630	741,446
Belfast, East	Lottery	192,886	222,345	1,223,778
Belfast, North	Exchequer	769,835	965,638	2,720,860
Belfast, North	Lottery	984,491	923,511	4,639,066
Belfast, South	Exchequer	4,000,930	4,198,149	12,434,232
Belfast, South	Lottery	2,612,073	978,688	11,888,802
Belfast, West	Exchequer	919,146	840,368	2,748,593
Belfast, West	Lottery	513,301	611,738	2,686,910
East Antrim	Exchequer	12,591	4,000	75,011
East Antrim	Lottery	28,628	19,614	477,123
East Londonderry	Exchequer	140,500	162,051	455,120
East Londonderry	Lottery	148,003	111,293	1,767,850
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	Exchequer	86,694	53,755	271,546
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	Lottery	605,945	302,354	1,386,618
Foyle	Exchequer	705,748	747,131	2,168,428
Foyle	Lottery	2,066,220	461,572	6,477,402
Lagan Valley	Exchequer	91,300	98,601	323,219
Lagan Valley	Lottery	100,330	107,293	472,818
Mid Ulster	Exchequer	25,000	31,200	73,550
Mid Ulster	Lottery	114,477	52,673	427,208
Newry and Armagh	Exchequer	230,900	249,950	789,112
Newry and Armagh	Lottery	45,396	47,058	820,071
North Antrim	Exchequer	4,519	600	39,624
North Antrim	Lottery	444,630	0	836,628
North Down	Exchequer	144,117	178,536	449,879
North Down	Lottery	388,374	133,665	968,722
South Antrim	Exchequer	27,000	0	54,400
South Antrim	Lottery	432,082	110,364	773,227
South Down	Exchequer	44,619	63,425	237,954
South Down	Lottery	142,917	161,754	924,109
Strangford	Exchequer	35,080	17,825	146,106
Strangford	Lottery	70,169	129,520	534,877
Upper Bann	Exchequer	51,650	50,500	161,399
Upper Bann	Lottery	460,070	246,430	1,144,313
West Tyrone	Exchequer	16,000	12,047	63,195
West Tyrone	Lottery	485,655	222,010	1,999,982
Total		17,351,582	12,682,747	63,403,176

Avian Influenza

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent steps he has taken to protect Northern Ireland from an outbreak of avian influenza. [18981]

Angela E. Smith: The threat posed by the spread of avian influenza is being kept under review and action taken to put in place the necessary protective measures.

The high pathogenic avian influenza H5N1 strain virus has been confirmed in both Turkey and Romania and all imports of poultry, poultry meat and products into the EU from Turkey and Romania have ceased. The EU agreed on 14 October that measures should be taken to reduce the risk of avian influenza being transmitted from wild birds to poultry and to ensure their early detection systems are effective. The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) is considering with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) what further action may be necessary to implement these requirements.

DARD has put in place a range of precautionary measures to address the risk of avian influenza entering Northern Ireland and to stop it spreading. Advice regarding biosecurity has recently been re-issued to the poultry industry and is available on the DARD website. An avian influenza survey is being carried out this autumn for the third year in succession on certain types of poultry, and wild bird surveillance is also being undertaken, with the support of the Environment and Heritage Service and other non-Government organisations.

There is close co-operation between relevant Departments to ensure a joined-up approach to the threat of avian influenza including in respect of the implications for public health. Officials are also working closely with their counterparts from the Department of Agriculture and Food in the Republic of Ireland in relation to avian influenza, which is of mutual interest in the context of the island of Ireland.

DARD has a contingency plan in place, which has been approved by the EU, to ensure that any outbreak of avian influenza is dealt with quickly and effectively. This plan is continually being reviewed and updated, and has been tested on two occasions in recent weeks.

Cancers

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the age standardised mortality rates for all cancers for men and women in each health board in Northern Ireland were in each of the last 10 years. [18243]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Deaths due to All cancers[1] (ICD-10 C00-C97)—European age-standardised mortality rate (per 100,000), by sex, year of death and health board (1995–2004)

	EHSSB		NHSSB		SHSSB		WHSSB	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1995	259.9	166.1	241.0	153.0	229.7	156.7	246.8	174.1
1996	251.3	161.9	244.5	157.7	218.5	159.2	266.8	162.9
1997	267.1	169.4	223.6	160.9	211.8	161.7	236.5	157.8
1998	264.7	160.2	225.5	167.6	240.2	153.7	250.0	160.9
1999	234.7	167.6	239.4	157.6	236.5	178.2	237.3	154.7
2000	235.4	170.3	202.6	170.3	213.6	163.3	230.8	159.2
2001	252.3	154.1	237.8	146.0	197.8	157.1	225.5	191.9
2002	236.8	157.7	202.9	145.4	227.1	139.7	218.1	156.1
2003	234.2	164.3	211.5	148.1	205.3	162.2	208.6	149.2
2004	232.4	158.6	224.4	150.1	202.7	154.4	212.1	161.3

[1] Includes non-melanoma skin cancer.

This information has been provided by the Northern Ireland Cancer Registry and is the most up to date currently available.

Cardiomyopathy

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many deaths in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years cardiomyopathy was *(a)* the cause and *(b)* a contributory factor. [18045]

Angela E. Smith: The following table gives the number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland for each year between 1995 and 2004, where cardiomyopathy[1] was recorded as either *(a)* the primary cause of death or *(b)* a contributory factor but not the primary cause of death.

[1] International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision code 142 for years 2001-04 and Ninth Revision code 425 for years 1995–2000.

Number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland where cardiomyopathy was recorded as (a) the primary cause of death or (b) a contributory factor but not the primary cause of death, 1995 to 2004

	Number of deaths registered where cardiomyopathy was:	
Registration year	(a) the primary cause of death	(b) a contributory factor but not the primary cause of death
1995	25	26
1996	35	27
1997	35	24
1998	27	24
1999	33	26
2000	24	27
2001	29	16
2002	24	19
2003	24	22
2004[1]	25	22

[1] Data for 2004 is provisional

Care Homes

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many care home places there were in Northern Ireland in 1996. [18030]

Mr. Woodward: At 31 March 1996, there were 16,698 care home places in Northern Ireland. This information includes places in residential and nursing homes, and places in children's homes as well as those for adults.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many care home places there are in the Province. [18183]

Mr. Woodward: At 31 March 2004 (the latest date for which information is available), there were 15,330 care home places in Northern Ireland. This information includes places in residential and nursing homes, and places in children's homes as well as those for adults.

Child Deaths

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many children died in accidents away from home, other than road deaths, in each of the last five years for which figures are available, broken down by the age groups *(a)* zero to seven, *(b)* eight to 13 and *(c)* 14 to 18 years. [18146]

Angela E. Smith: The following table gives the number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland, for each year from 2000 to 2004, due to non-transport related accidents[1] outside the home by age-groups *(a)* zero to seven, *(b)* eight to 13 and *(c)* 14 to 18 years respectively.

[1] International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes W00-X59 for years 2001-04 and Ninth Revision codes E850-E869, E880-E928, and E929.2-E929.9 for year 2000.

Number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland due to non-transport related accidents outside the home by age groups (a) 0–7, (b) 8–13 and (c) 14–18 years respectively, 2000–04

	Age group		
Registration year	*(a) 0–7 years*	*(b) 8–13 years*	*(c) 14–18 years*
2000	3	2	2
2001	1	1	3
2002	1	1	4
2003	0	1	2
2004[1]	3	1	1

[1] Data for 2004 are provisional

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many children died in accidents in the home, other than fire, in each of the last five years for which figures are available, broken down by the age groups *(a)* zero to seven, *(b)* eight to 13 and *(c)* 14 to 18 years. [18147]

Angela E. Smith: The following table gives the number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland, for each year between 2000 and 2004, due to domestic non-fire related accidents[1] broken down by the age groups *(a)* zero to seven, *(b)* eight to 13 and *(c)* 14 to 18 years respectively.

[1] International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes W00-W99 and X10-X59 for years 2001-04 and Ninth Revision codes E850-E869, E880-E888, E900-E928, and E929.2-E929.9 (including E929.4) for year 2000.

Number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland due to domestic non-fire related accidents by the age groups (a) 0–7, (b) 8–13 and (c) 14–18 years respectively, 2000–04

	Age group		
Registration year	*(a) 0–7 years*	*(b) 8–13 years*	*(c) 14–18 years*
2000	1	0	2
2001	0	0	3
2002	1	0	3
2003	2	0	2
2004[1]	2	0	2

[1] Data for 2004 are provisional.

Deaf Children

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many children suffering from deafness have been in full-time education in Northern Ireland in each year that figures have been recorded. [18238]

Angela E. Smith: The requested information is as follows:

School year	*Number of pupils recorded as suffering from deafness*
2002–03	117
2003–04	116
2004–05	128

Figures prior to 2002–03 were only collected in respect of children with a statement of special educational needs.

Dentistry

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of Northern Ireland's adult population is registered with a dentist; and how many children are registered with a dentist. [18024]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is provided in the following table:

	Registered
Percentage of adults registered with a NHS dentist, June 2005[1,2]	64.0
Number of children registered with a NHS dentist, June 2005[2]	279,839

[1] Figures are derived from dental registration data and the 2004 mid-year estimate of population (latest available from General Registrar Northern Ireland).
[2] Figures for registered patients include a small proportion who may reside temporarily elsewhere in the UK.
Source:
Central Services Agency.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of children in Northern Ireland were registered with a dentist in 1997. [18028]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is provided in the table.

	Percentage
Children registered with an NHS Dentist, June 1997	61.3

Source:
Central Services Agency.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many adults in Northern Ireland are registered with a dentist. [18035]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is provided in the following table.

	Number
Adults registered with an NHS dentist, June 2005[1,2]	655,585

Notes:
[1] Figures are derived from dental registration data.
[2] Figures for registered patients include a small proportion who may reside temporarily elsewhere in the UK.
Source:
Central Services Agency

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of adults in the Province were registered with a dentist in 1997. [18180]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is as follows.

	Percentage
Adults registered with an NHS dentist, June 1997	56.8

Source:
Central Services Agency

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many adults in the Province were registered with a dentist in 1997. [18189]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is provided in the following table.

	Number
Adults registered with an NHS dentist, June 1997[1,2]	683,750

Notes:
[1] Figures are derived from dental registration data.
[2] Figures for registered patients include a small proportion who may reside temporarily elsewhere in the UK.
Source:
Central Services Agency

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of children in the Province are registered with a dentist. [18419]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is provided in the following table.

	Percentage
Children registered with an NHS dentist, June 2005[1,2]	64.0

Notes:
[1] Figures are derived from dental registration data and the 2004 mid-year estimate of population (latest available from General Registrar Northern Ireland).
[2] Figures for registered patients include a small proportion who may reside temporarily elsewhere in the UK.
Source:
Central Services Agency.

Domiciliary Care

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many individuals are receiving domiciliary care packages in the Province; and how many such individuals there were in 1996. [18184]

Mr. Woodward: At 31 March 2005 (the latest date for which information is available), there were 8,184 persons in receipt of care managed domiciliary packages. At 31 March 1996, there were 6,095 persons in receipt of such packages.

Education and Library Boards

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what opportunities education and library boards have to amend financial schemes or resource plans which the Department has required them to work to. [18471]

Angela E. Smith: Under Article 10 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 a board may, with the approval of the department, at anytime submit a revised resource allocation plan to the department for consideration and approval with or without modifications.

Farm-related Accidents

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many farm-related accidents resulted in a death in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [18242]

Angela E. Smith: The numbers of farm-related accidents resulting in a death in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years are as follows: Six in 2000–01; four in 2001–02; six in 2002–03; eight in 2003–04; and five in 2004–05. The Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland continues to work, in partnership with other key organisations such as the Ulster Farmers Union, to improve health and safety performance in the agriculture sector, particularly in relation to vulnerable groups such as children and the elderly.

Fireworks

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many injuries from fireworks there have been in Northern Ireland in each year since 2001. [18222]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the number of patients reporting to A&E Departments and Minor Injuries Units with injuries from fireworks, since 2001, over a selected 4–5 week period covering the end of October and start of November (Halloween period) is available and is detailed in the following table:

	Number of firework injuries
2004	55
2003	45
2002	38
2001	136

Note:
Figures do not include injuries from fireworks outside the survey period and will not include injuries which were not sufficiently serious to warrant attendance at an A&E Department or Minor Injuries Unit.

Health Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was spent on *(a)* hospital and *(b)* community health services in Northern Ireland in 2003. [18014]

Mr. Woodward: Total expenditure on hospital services in 2003 was £991 million and total expenditure on community health services in 2003 was £223 million.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total spending on *(a)* hospital and *(b)* community health services was in Northern Ireland during the last 12 months. [18036]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not available at present. Expenditure information relating to the 2004–05 financial year is currently being collected and will be available in early 2006.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total spending on *(a)* hospital and *(b)* community health services in the Province was in 1999. [18187]

Mr. Woodward: Total expenditure on hospital services in 1999 was £694 million and total expenditure on community health services in 1999 was £142 million.

Hospital Consultant Posts

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many full-time hospital consultant posts there are in the Province; and how many there were *(a)* five and *(b)* 10 years ago. [17549]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is provided in the following tables.

Number of hospital medical consultants posts for each of the given years

	Medical consultant posts	
	Headcount	*Whole-time equivalent*
2005	1,048	1,001.30
2000	833	798.52
1995[1]	n/a	n/a

[1] 1995 figures were not available.

Notes:

1. Vacancy information for 2000 was not available for Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust and Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust, therefore the figures quoted for these years for these trusts are staff in post as opposed to establishment figures.
2. Figures for Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust exclude consultant joint appointments with QUB.
3. 2000 figures for Homefirst Community HSS Trust have been sourced from manual records.
4. 2000 vacancy figures have been estimated by Newry and Mourne HSS Trust.

Source:

NI HSS Trusts

Number of hospital dental consultants posts for each of the given years

	Dental consultant posts	
	Headcount	*Whole-time equivalent*
2005	7	6.18
2000	8	5.81
1995[1]	n/a	n/a

[1] 1995 figures were not available.

Notes:

1. Vacancy information for 2000 was not available for Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust and Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust, therefore the figures quoted for these years for these trusts are staff in post as opposed to establishment figures.
2. Figures for Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust exclude consultant joint appointments with QUB.

Source:

NI HSS Trusts

Total number of hospital consultants posts for each of the given years

	Total consultant posts	
	Headcount	*Whole-time equivalent*
2005	1,055	1,007.48
2000	841	804.33
1995[1]	n/a	n/a

[1] 1995 Figures were not available.

Notes:

1. Vacancy information for 2000 was not available for Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust and Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust, therefore the figures quoted for these years for these Trusts are Staff in Post as opposed to Establishment figures.
2. Figures for Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust exclude consultant joint appointments with QUB.
3. 2000 figures for Homefirst Community HSS Trust have been sourced from manual records.
4. 2000 vacancy figures have been estimated by Newry and Mourne HSS Trust.

Source:

NI HSS Trusts

Hospital Doctor Posts

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many new full-time hospital doctor posts have been established in the Province in each of the last five years. [17548]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is not available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Hospital Treatments

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate the average waiting time for *(a)* hospital in-patient treatment and *(b)* initial out-patient assessment in Northern Ireland in the last year for which figures are available. [18029]

Mr. Woodward: Waiting list information is collected by time band. It is therefore not possible to calculate the arithmetic mean (average) length of time waiting. It is however possible to identify the median or mid point waiting time band.

(a) The median waiting time band for in-patients who were waiting for treatment at 30 June 2005 was 0 to two months.

(b) The median waiting time band for out-patients who were waiting for their first appointment at 30 June 2005 was three to five months.

In July this year, I announced a major programme of reform to reduce waiting times and eradicate long waiters. I intend to make a further announcement to outline proposals to tackle outpatient waiting times later this year.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average waiting time for hospital in-patient treatment in the Province was in 1997. [18181]

Mr. Woodward: Waiting list information is collected by time band. It is therefore not possible to calculate the arithmetic mean (average) length of time waiting. It is however possible to identify the median or mid point waiting time band.

The median waiting time band for in-patients who were waiting for treatment at 30 June 1997 was 3–5 months.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average waiting time for initial outpatient assessment in the Province was in 1997. [18182]

Mr. Woodward: Waiting list information is collected by time band. It is therefore not possible to calculate the arithmetic mean (average) length of time waiting. It is however possible to identify the median or mid point waiting time band.

The median waiting time band for outpatients who were waiting for their first appointment at 30 June 1997 was 0–2 months.

Hospital-acquired Infections

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have died from *(a)* hospital acquired and *(b)* other healthcare acquired infections in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [18038]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not available.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate the costs resulting from all healthcare-acquired infections in the Province in the most recent year for which information is available. [18433]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not available.

Infant Mortality

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the infant mortality rate was in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [18023]

Angela E. Smith: The following table details the infant mortality rate[1] in Northern Ireland for each registration year between 1995 and 2004.

[1] The infant mortality rate is defined as the number of deaths of children in their first year of life per1,000 live births.

Registration year	*Infant mortality rate*
1995	7.1
1996	5.8
1997	5.6
1998	5.6
1999	6.4
2000	5.0
2001	6.0
2002	4.6
2003	5.2
2004[1]	5.3

[1] Data for 2004 are provisional

Jim Gray

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on how many occasions the Police Service of Northern Ireland notified Jim Gray that there was a threat on his life. [18144]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service of Northern Ireland does not provide information on matters of intelligence relating to the security of individuals. However, the service takes such matters very seriously, and when it believes an individual to be under threat it takes steps to inform and advise them with regard to personal security.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many health and safety fines have been issued by each of the local government councils in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [18062]

Angela E. Smith: Local government councils in Northern Ireland do not issue health and safety fines. In common with the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland, Local government councils bring prosecutions for breaches of legislation to the courts and if a prosecution is successful the courts will decide if a fine should be imposed or not. The number of successful prosecutions taken by each of the Local government councils in each of the last five years that led to fines being imposed is set out in the following table. Only those councils that took prosecutions are listed. A breakdown figure for councils before 2001–02 is not available.

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Ards	—	—	—	1
Ballymena	—	1	1	—
Banbridge	—	—	1	—
Belfast	1	3	1	—
Coleraine	—	—	1	—
Fermanagh	—	1	—	—
Limavady	—	1	1	—
Lisburn	2	—	—	1
Newry and Mourne	—	1	1	—
Total	3	7	6	2

Maritime Safety

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many incidents needing medical attention have occurred on beaches in Northern Ireland in each of the last three years. [18230]

Mr. Woodward: Information is only readily available for the most recent year, 1 October 2004 to 30 September 2005, during which the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service attended 37 incidents requiring medical assistance on beaches and their environs.

MRSA

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many cases of MRSA were identified within each *(a)* hospital and *(b)* health trust in the Province in each month of each the last three years. [17117]

Mr. Woodward: The information is not available in the format requested, however the number of cases of MRSA that were identified within each health trust in the Province is available quarterly for the last three years and is presented in the following tables.

Number of Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureus bacteraemia patient episodes reported to CDSC (NI) by trust and quarter

	2002			2003		
Health trust	*July to September*	*October to December*	*January to March*	*April to June*	*July to September*	*October to December*
Altnagelvin Hospitals	2	3	5	2	4	6
Belfast City Hospital	13	13	10	13	15	17
Causeway	4	2	0	5	2	2
Craigavon Area Hospital Group	6	2	2	6	5	12
Down Lisburn	0	3	3	5	2	2
Green Park	1	0	2	0	2	1
Mater Infirmorum Hospital	4	6	7	5	7	6
Newry and Mourne	2	0	1	4	1	4
Royal Group of Hospitals	4	8	9	11	12	10
Sperrin Lakeland	1	0	6	2	6	1
Ulster Community and Hospitals	8	11	7	5	7	4
United Hospitals	6	9	10	17	9	10
Northern Ireland	51	57	62	75	72	75

	2004				2005	
Health trust	*January to March*	*April to June*	*July to September*	*October to December*	*January to March*	*April to June*[1]
Altnagelvin Hospitals	10	6	1	5	5	7
Belfast City Hospital	18	9	13	7	7	18
Causeway	3	1	4	1	3	3
Craigavon Area Hospital Group	7	8	5	4	4	6
Down Lisburn	5	4	5	3	4	0
Green Park	1	1	0	0	1	2
Mater Infirmorum Hospital	4	0	0	5	4	7
Newry and Mourne	2	0	1	2	0	0
Royal Group of Hospitals	13	8	11	12	13	13
Sperrin Lakeland	7	5	4	0	2	1
Ulster Community and Hospitals	2	12	12	8	4	11
United Hospitals	13	10	10	8	10	5
Northern Ireland	85	64	66	55	57	73

[1] Figures are provisional.

Notes:

1. MRSA patient episodes '(MRSA PE) is defined as the total number of patients from whom blood cultureset(s) collected during the quarter grew MRS A. If repeat specimens were collected from a single patient, and the patient was considered to have had two episodes of bacteraemia, then they should be counted as two patients. As an arbitrary measure, if positive blood culture sets are collected more than 14 days apart, they should be considered as reflecting different episodes.
2. Please note that it is not possible to state how many of these patients with MRS A positive blood cultures acquired their infection in hospital. Some will have been acquired in hospital but others will have acquired infection before admission to hospital, either in the community, or in another healthcare institution.
3. Reports of patient episodes from a Trust may relate to patients who became infected in, and were reported by, another Trust. Patients whose infections were acquired in one hospital, and were subsequently transferred to another hospital, either within the same Trust or to another Trust, may have been counted more than once.
4. Many confounding factors will influence numbers within Trusts. For instance, Trusts with different clinical mixes and specialties will have different numbers of patients at high risk of MRSA infections. For example, a hospital with a specialised renal unit would treat high numbers of patients who are at increased risk of infection and re-infection.

Source:

Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre NI.

Multiple Sclerosis

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many patients within each health board area in the Province are waiting to commence beta interferon or glatiramer for multiple sclerosis. [18428]

Mr. Woodward: The number of patients within each health board area in the Province waiting for beta interferon or glatiramer treatment for multiple sclerosis at 30 September 2005 are as follows.

Beta interferon/glatiramer treatment at 30 September 2005

Health board	*Number waiting*
Eastern	56
Northern	56
Southern	16
Western	19
NI total	147

Note:

Patients currently suspended from the waiting list are excluded from these figures.

Operations

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate how many hospital operations were postponed in Northern Ireland in the last 12 months. [18032]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not available.

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many operating theatres are in operation in each hospital in Northern Ireland. [18143]

Mr. Woodward: The number of operating theatres in each hospital in Northern Ireland at 31 March 2005 is detailed in the following table:

Hospital	*Number of operating theatres at 31 March 2005*
Altnagelvin	12
Antrim	8
Ards	2
Belfast City	10
Belvoir Park	1
Causeway	5
Craigavon Area	7
Daisy Hill	3
Downe	2
Erne	2
Lagan Valley	3
Mater	5
Mid-Ulster	2
Musgrave Park	8
RBHSC	3
Royal Maternity	2
Royal Victoria	21
South Tyrone	3
Tyrone County	3
Ulster	10
Whiteabbey	2
Total	114

Orange Halls

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he expects legislation to provide for the de-rating of Orange halls to come into force; and if he will make a statement. [18982]

Angela E. Smith: The draft Rates (Capital values, etc.) (Northern Ireland) Order 2005, which was published on 7 October for consultation, provides for the full exemption of community halls from rates. It is intended that the Order will come into operation in April 2006.

The award of full exemption will be conditional on halls being made available for use by the wider community; not having a liquor licence; and not being occupied by a registered club. This will ensure that assistance is directed towards organisations which are unable to generate income to assist with the payment of rates.

Planning

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many planning applications there have been in each of the six divisional offices in Northern Ireland in each of the last three years; and how many applications this represents per employee dealing with such matters at each office. [18607]

Angela E. Smith: The information requested is as follows:

Applications received by division and by financial year

Division	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Ballymena	4,001	5,328	4,975
Belfast	3,592	3,840	3,862
Craigavon	6,060	7,493	6,846
Downpatrick	5,001	5,036	6,090
Londonderry	3,556	4,349	4,969
Omagh	5,501	6,800	9,205
Total	27,711	32,846	35,947

It is not possible to assess in a reliable way how many applications this represents per employee because a number of development control staff (both professional and technological staff as well as administrative staff) can be involved to varying degrees in dealing with each planning application at different stages in the planning process.

The number of development control staff in each division during 2003–04 and 2004–05 is set out as follows. The breakdown of development control staff by division is not available for 2002–03.

Development control staffing figures

Division	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Ballymena	48	58
Belfast	36	55
Craigavon	56	78
Downpatrick	48	62
Londonderry	39	55
Omagh	62	68
Total	289	376

Police

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average number of police officers was in each district command unit in the Province in each of the last five years. [17535]

Mr. Woodward: The following table details the end of year actual strength full-time equivalent figures for each DCU in each of the past five years.

DCU	*2001*			*2002*			*2003*		
	REG	*FTR*	*PTR*	*REG*	*FTR*	*PTR*	*REG*	*FTR*	*PTR*
Ballymena	119	23	50	119	22	46	138	21	43
Ballymoney	60	14	8	70	12	7	64	12	6
Coleraine	118	42	34	130	39	31	138	33	26
Fermanagh	197	90	35	186	72	32	179	59	25
Foyle	242	104	8	227	80	8	237	69	8

DCU	2001 REG	2001 FTR	2001 PTR	2002 REG	2002 FTR	2002 PTR	2003 REG	2003 FTR	2003 PTR
Larne	71	25	28	75	16	27	82	17	24
Limavady	67	27	7	74	23	7	79	22	6
Magherafelt	92	55	7	93	48	7	90	45	5
Moyle	24	11	2	29	10	2	29	10	3
Omagh	144	42	31	123	34	30	129	33	24
Strabane	111	63	22	100	55	22	102	46	20
Ards	133	51	90	123	46	85	144	49	77
Armagh	135	66	21	140	54	20	134	49	19
Banbridge	80	30	36	82	28	35	87	27	32
Cookstown	87	41	7	89	28	5	91	24	4
Craigavon	194	78	42	184	56	38	193	47	37
Dungannon and S Tyrone	175	81	14	165	57	13	149	47	13
Down	159	69	28	159	59	26	159	55	26
Newry and Mourne	188	97	4	180	78	4	190	64	4
Antrim	110	55	23	103	44	21	140	50	20
Belfast East	226	140	86	198	108	80	216	114	73
Belfast North	364	120	102	359	95	96	341	79	83
Belfast South	325	148	88	326	119	81	345	107	79
Belfast West	286	217	0	261	180	0	237	155	0
Carrickfergus	83	54	35	70	50	33	81	41	33
Castlereagh	118	71	57	111	66	53	120	59	51
Lisburn	220	113	64	235	101	61	234	87	56
Newtownabbey	144	27	57	136	24	53	138	25	47
North Down	150	97	53	143	81	44	154	69	42
Total	4,422	2,051	1,039	4,290	1,685	967	4,420	1,515	886

DCU	2004 REG	2004 FTR	2004 PTR	2005 REG	2005 FTR	2005 PTR/ CONPT
Ballymena	139	17	34	148.25	14	32
Ballymoney	61	12	6	67	9	5
Coleraine	128.75	29	26	151.75	23	22/26
Fermanagh	167.5	51	23	161	44	21
Foyle	258.75	60	8	251.75	50	7
Larne	72	16	22	69	11	16/2
Limavady	76	21	4	83	14	4
Magherafelt	87.5	41	4	92.5	22	4
Moyle	31	9	3	37	7	3
Omagh	126.75	30	20	123.75	25	19
Strabane	110.75	39	19	114	32	16
Ards	144.75	35	73	145.25	29	69
Armagh	125	50	15	127.5	37	16
Banbridge	93.5	19.75	28	97.5	11.75	28/7
Cookstown	85	22	2	89	14	3
Craigavon	187.75	41	31	191	27	28
Dungannon and S Tyrone	136.75	39	9	141.75	28	7
Down	163.5	48	25	159.5	35	25
Newry and Mourne	197	50	4	205	45	4
Antrim	140.75	47	17	138.75	39	17
Belfast East	215	118	68	208	85	60
Belfast North	335.75	78	74	342.75	71	67
Belfast South	361.5	80	74	387.5	53	72
Belfast West	230	130.75	0	231	81.75	0
Carrickfergus	74	37	30	77	25	26/2
Castlereagh	127.5	56	46	118.25	42	41
Lisburn	221.75	76	61	241.75	41	51/59
Newtownabbey	151	22	51	161	22	46/26
North Down	152.75	44	38	143.25	34	36
Total	4,402.25	1,318.5	815	4,504.75	971.5	745/122

Note:
Record No. 637126

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average police response time was in each district command unit in the Province in each of the last five years. [17533]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service of Northern Ireland does not currently record the response times to calls and this information could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

However, the current policing plan requires PSNI to work towards establishing a baseline for measuring police response times to emergency calls. Work is ongoing to establish how this may be achieved, and a report will be passed to the chief constable at the end of the financial year.

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been spent on the grid leadership programme by the Police Service of Northern Ireland since it was introduced. [18542]

Mr. Woodward: The expenditure to date is £846,581.06.

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many times grievance procedures have been initiated by staff at the police training college in Northern Ireland in each year since 1998. [18540]

Mr. Woodward: I am advised 19 grievance procedures were initiated by staff attached to the police college in the period 1998 to present. The breakdown by year is as follows:

	Number commenced
1998	0
1999	1
2000	3
2001	2
2002	3
2003	6
2004	3
2005[1]	1

[1] To date.

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what changes were recommended to management processes within the police training college in Northern Ireland following the recent investigation by the internal investigation branch; and how these changes have been implemented. [18541]

Mr. Woodward: The report constructed by internal investigation branch is an internal matter for the chief constable.

However I am advised that all of the recommendations of the IIB report have been implemented.

Refuse Collection

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what research has been carried out comparing the cost of collecting household rubbish per household in Northern Ireland with the cost in other parts of the UK. [18690]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of the Environment has not carried out research comparing the cost of collecting household rubbish per household in Northern Ireland with the cost in other parts of the UK. However, one of the reporting functions of WasteDataFlow—a national web-based system for all UK local authority/district council waste data reporting—will facilitate the comparison of the cost of collecting household waste per household across all local authorities/district councils in the UK. This information should be available by the autumn of 2006.

Respite Care

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many respite care places have been available in each year since 1998. [18239]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the number of respite care places is not available centrally. Health and Social Services Boards and Trusts do not have a specified number of residential or nursing home places dedicated solely to respite care, as places may be used to accommodate either permanent residents or persons requiring respite according to demand.

Road Traffic Accidents

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* fatal, *(b)* severe non-fatal and *(c)* other non-fatal injuries have been sustained in road traffic accidents by (i) drivers, (ii) passengers, (iii) cyclists and (iv) pedestrians in each of the last 10 years. [18244]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is set out in the following table:

Number of casualties by severity and road user class

Road user/Casualty severity	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Pedestrians										
Killed	47	42	37	40	39	32	32	33	28	23
Seriously injured	317	320	307	297	265	292	268	244	222	190
Slightly injured	865	894	858	887	832	852	678	631	558	532
Total	1229	1,256	1,202	1,224	1,136	1,176	978	908	808	745
Drivers of motor vehicles										
Killed	48	62	54	51	62	91	64	56	57	63
Seriously injured	609	674	631	615	628	748	738	656	523	509
Slightly injured	4,791	5,147	5,280	5,630	5,836	6,417	5,795	5,246	4,526	4,216
Total	5,448	5,883	5,965	6,296	6,526	7,256	6,597	5,958	5,106	4,788
Motorcyclists										
Killed	8	7	15	10	7	7	11	19	20	22
Seriously injured	99	72	80	85	98	138	146	168	144	143
Slightly injured	141	137	178	216	230	326	268	278	285	311
Total	248	216	273	311	335	471	425	465	449	476

Number of casualties by severity and road user class

Road user/Casualty severity	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Pedal cyclists										
Killed	4	5	4	7	1	4	2	3	2	2
Seriously injured	68	54	58	53	51	52	43	27	36	27
Slightly injured	313	300	277	265	217	210	167	139	155	131
Total	385	359	339	325	269	266	212	169	193	160
Passengers										
Killed	36	25	32	50	30	36	38	39	37	36
Seriously injured	421	462	455	468	448	540	461	406	347	295
Slightly injured	3,877	4,277	4,336	4,614	4,597	4,890	4,325	3,870	3,324	2,950
Total	4,334	4,764	4,823	5,132	5,075	5,466	4,824	4,315	3,708	3,281
Pillion passengers										
Killed	1	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	2	0
Seriously injured	7	9	1	6	6	11	10	13	9	8
Slightly injured	17	14	18	12	15	17	26	20	14	13
Total	25	23	29	19	23	28	36	33	25	21
Other road users										
Killed	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	4	1
Seriously injured	11	8	7	14	13	5	16	12	7	11
Slightly injured	45	65	59	80	72	51	53	54	25	24
Total	56	74	67	95	85	57	70	66	36	36
All road users										
Killed	144	142	144	160	141	171	148	150	150	147
Seriously injured	1,532	1,599	1,548	1,538	1,509	1,786	1,682	1,526	1,288	1,183
Slightly injured	10,049	10,834	11,006	11,704	11,799	12,763	11,312	10,238	8,887	8,177
Total	11,725	12,575	12,698	13,402	13,449	14,720	13,142	11,914	10,325	9,507

School Leavers

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of school leavers in *(a)* the constituency of East Belfast and *(b)* in Northern Ireland as a whole entered higher education in each of the last four years. [18223]

Angela E. Smith: The percentage of school leavers entering higher education in each of the last four years is as follows:

Percentage of school leavers entering higher education

	East Belfast	*Northern Ireland*
2003–04	38.0	37.1
2002–03	n/a	n/a
2001–02	36.0	35.5
2000–01	32.6	33.3

n/a = not available

Tuberculosis

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many notifications of tubercalosis in the Province there have been in each of the last *(a)* 10 years and *(b)* 12 months. [18420]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the number of cases of tuberculosis is not available on a monthly basis. Information for each of the last 10 years is detailed in the following table:

	Tuberculosis
2004[1]	84
2003	57
2002	67
2001	55
2000	51
1999	57
1998	66
1997	70
1996	78
1995	84

[1] Figure for 2004 relating to tuberculosis is provisional.

Source:

Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre NI (CDSCNI), data are taken from the NI enhanced TB surveillance programme.

Please note that figures may have changed since last reported due to CDSCNI undertaking a retrospective review of laboratory confirmed cases between 1994 and 2000.

Vehicle Excise Duty

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many cars are taxed for road use in Northern Ireland; and what estimate he has made of the number avoiding payment of vehicle excise duty. [18103]

Angela E. Smith: At 31 December 2004, there were 736,706 cars licensed in Northern Ireland. In a survey of vehicle excise duty evasion carried out in 2004, the estimated evasion in traffic in the private and light goods tax classes (cars and light vans) in Northern Ireland was 6 per cent.

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much money was collected from vehicle excise duty for all vehicles in Northern Ireland in the last period for which figures are available. [18105]

Angela E. Smith: For the Financial Year ended 31 March 2005, £127,469,900 was collected in vehicle excise duty in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many motorcycles are taxed for road use in Northern Ireland. [18106]

Angela E. Smith: At 31 December 2004, there were 27,326 motorcycles licensed in Northern Ireland.

Warm Homes Scheme

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether he intends to invite tenders for the management of the Warm Homes Scheme when the current contract runs out. [18668]

Mr. Hanson: The current contract for managing the Warm Homes Scheme, which expires in June 2006, has an option for a two-year extension. My Department will shortly consider whether to apply this option or to re-tender the contract.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he expects that targets will be set for the current year for the Warm Homes Scheme in Northern Ireland. [18669]

Mr. Hanson: The target for the current financial year, as set out in the Department's 2005–06 Corporate and Business Plan, is to improve energy efficiency in 8,250 private sector homes through the Warm Homes Scheme.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the merits of the extension of the Warm Homes Scheme to cover more categories of people in fuel poverty. [18670]

Mr. Hanson: The Warm Homes Scheme is targeted to assist the most vulnerable members of our society in fuel poverty. Within its current budget allocation, any extension of the scheme beyond its current limits would, clearly, lessen its impact and effectiveness. I have no plans, therefore, to extend the scheme at present but I will continue to keep the situation under review.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Alcohol Licences

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment the Government have made of whether the cost of appealing against a decision to grant an extended licence for the sale of alcohol is deterring people from doing so. [18498]

James Purnell: The fee that is payable to the magistrates court upon lodging an appeal, under schedule 6 of the Magistrates Courts Act 1980, is £23.50 inclusive. I do not believe that this is prohibitively high. Occasionally, additional costs may be awarded against an appellant at the magistrate's discretion if an appeal is considered vexatious or frivolous. The advice of the Magistrates Association and the Justices Clerks Society is that the awarding of costs for a licensing appeal should be an exception and not a rule. We would therefore not expect residents who are appealing to be penalised.

Archaeology and Heritage

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps the Government has taken to involve and interest young people in *(a)* archaeology and *(b)* heritage; and if she will make a statement. [17769]

Mr. Lammy: We are working with DfES , English Heritage and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) to promote the educational value of the contemporary and historic built environment as a learning resource for schools, to engage teachers; young people, and the wider community.

Each year more than half a million school children visit English Heritage sites free of charge and over 400 family events are organised, from re-enactments to experience days. English Heritage supports the Council for British Archaeology in running National Archaeology Week during which, this year, an estimated 100,000 people took part.

Astroturf

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what safety guidelines the Government has issued in relation to the use of Astroturf pitches by children and young adults. [18618]

Mr. Caborn: Sport England has produced guidance materials in partnership with the Sports and Play Construction Association (SAPCA) which define the standards considered acceptable for the procurement and construction of multi-use games areas and synthetic turf pitches. The guidance includes health and safety considerations and is primarily aimed at pitches designed for community use. The material complements existing technical guidance available from Sport England, SAPCA and the Governing Bodies of sport. The guidance is available on the Sport England website: www.sportengland.org/muga_part1.pdf. I am arranging for copies of the guidance to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions the Minister for Sport has had with *(a)* Hammersmith and Fulham council and *(b)* the Fulham Football Club Community Sports Trust in relation to their plans to astroturf an area of Bishops Park, London, SW6; and if she will make a statement. [18619]

Mr. Caborn: None. We are aware that a planning application has been submitted to Hammersmith and Fulham council to construct a multi-use artificial sports pitch and playing surface for community use at Bishop's Park. Sport England has been consulted on the planning application as a statutory consultee.

Burns Inquiry

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions her Department has had with the Football Association on the Burns Inquiry; and if she will make a statement on implementing her recommendations. [18507]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* I have had a number of discussions with the Football Association about Lord Burns' Structural Review of the FA.

It is very important that the FA responds effectively to the demands of the game in the 21st century and Lord Burns' report provides a firm foundation for real progress to be made. It is vital that the FA takes full advantage of this opportunity and that they take up the challenge and implement the recommendations expeditiously.

I will be watching closely the implementation process while respecting that this was an independent review and that it is for the FA to implement Lord Burns' recommendations.

Churches

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make further resources available for the repair of churches which are important heritage sites. [19219]

Mr. Lammy: The Government have in place a range of initiatives to financially support the repair and maintenance of listed churches and cathedrals. The English Heritage 'Grants for Cathedrals' scheme has paid out over £40 million since 1991, and continues to offer a total of £1 million per year for the repair and protection of cathedrals. The joint English Heritage/ Heritage Lottery Fund 'Repair Grants for Places of Worship' scheme is this year offering £24.5 million for the repair of historic church buildings, bringing to over £57 million the total offered under this scheme since its inception in 2002.

The Chancellor announced, during Budget 2005, an extension to 2008 of the Listed Places of Worship Grant scheme. This scheme returns to faith groups the equivalent of the VAT incurred in repairing the fabric of listed places of worship. Around £35 million has been returned under the scheme since 2001.

The Government support the Churches Conservation Trust with £3 million per year. The trust cares for 334 of the most architecturally or historically significant Anglican churches no longer needed for worship.

Departmental Estate

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total floor space area is of buildings *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by (i) her Department and (ii) its agencies. [17904]

Mr. Lammy: The information requested is as follows.

	Sq mtrs
A (ii)	
Royal Parks Agency	4,810
B (i)	
Cockspur Street	8,744
Grove House	1,365.36
Oceanic House	1,320.05
Tottenham Court Road	1,840.45
Blandford Street	248.7

Departmental Underspending

Helen Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what her Department's underspend was in 2004–05 *(a)* in cash terms and *(b)* as a percentage of departmental budget. [19248]

Mr. Lammy: The latest estimate of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's underspend for 2004–05 is shown in the Public Expenditure Outturn White Paper published in July 2005 (cm6639). Copies are available in the Libraries of both Houses.

Departmental Vehicles

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many vehicles for which the Department is responsible are fitted with retreaded tyres. [17995]

Mr. Lammy: None, all vehicles are provided by the Government Car and Dispatch Agency.

Digital Broadcasting

Mr. Michael Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will provide public funding to research and pilot local commercial media services on digital platforms. [18600]

James Purnell: The Government, jointly with Ofcom, has commissioned research into the economic sustainability of local television services on digital platforms. I have no plans to fund pilots of local commercial media services.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received regarding the transmission and reception of digital television in the Bexhill-on-Sea and Battle area. [18724]

James Purnell *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* We have received no recent representation apart from the hon. Member's letter of 12 June, regarding the availability of digital terrestrial television (DTT) services in Bexhill-on-Sea and Battle.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to increase the take-up of BBC Freeview in the Bexhill-on-Sea and Battle area. [18715]

James Purnell *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* The vast majority of households in Bexhill-on-Sea and Battle can, with the appropriate equipment, receive the BBC's digital television services via digital satellite or digital terrestrial.

The Secretary of State has confirmed the regional timetable for digital switchover; it will take place between 2008 and 2012 by ITV region in the following order:

	ITV region
2008	Border
2009	West Country, HTV Wales, Granada
2010	HTV West, Grampian, Scottish Television
2011	Yorkshire, Anglia, Central
2012	Meridian, Carlton/LWT (London), Tyne Tees, Ulster

Note:
Further details can be found at www.digitaltelevision.gov.uk

Digital switchover will take place in Bexhill-on-Sea and Battle (Meridian region) in 2012; it will enable coverage of digital terrestrial television to reach the same level as that of the current analogue signals.

Football

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what role the Government has in the Barclays Premiership Football in the Community scheme. [18614]

Mr. Caborn: The Barclays Spaces for Sports scheme is an exciting new partnership between Barclays, Groundwork and the Football Foundation, providing £30 million over three years to create or improve sports facilities in communities across the UK. Seven flagship sites per year will be delivered with matched funding from the Football Foundation.

The Government fully supports this partnership and while the scheme is independent of Government, the Government, in partnership with the Football Association, FA Premier League, each fund the Football Foundation £45 million over three years.

Libraries

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent steps her Department has taken to encourage library use; and if she will make a statement. [16901]

Mr. Lammy: Since 2002 DCMS has introduced a range of improvement measures such as the Public Library Standards and the Framework for the Future Strategy and Action Plan. There have also been developments such as the inception of the People's Network which has linked virtually all of the country's public libraries to the internet. Visits to public libraries have increased by 19 million in the past two years.

Licensing Act

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will take steps to ensure that residents appealing the award of a late licence to a nearby establishment under the Licensing Act 2003 will not incur legal costs if their appeal is lost. [19067]

James Purnell: A resident wishing to appeal against the decision to grant an extension under the Licensing Act 2003 has to pay a procedural fee of £23.50 in total. This is the usual payment required by the courts to cover costs incurred issuing and delivering a summons of complaint.

The awarding of costs is a matter for the courts. The advice of the Magistrates Association and the Justices Clerks Society is that the awarding of costs for a licensing appeal should be an exception and not a rule. I would therefore not expect residents who are appealing to be penalised.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what her policy is on whether a local licensing authority may use a special policy on cumulative impact to refuse a variation for longer opening hours to serve alcohol, in an existing premises licence, under the Licensing Act 2003; and if she will make a statement. [18195]

James Purnell: The Guidance issued by my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, to licensing authorities, under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003, makes it clear that the cumulative impact of licensed premises on the promotion of the licensing objectives is a proper matter for a licensing authority to consider in developing its licensing policy statement. The guidance sets out how the licensing authority can consider adopting a special policy on cumulative impact. It also states that the effect of such a policy is to create a rebuttable presumption that applications for new premises licences or club premises certificates or material variations (which could include longer opening hours) will normally be refused, if relevant representations to that effect are received. The onus would be on the applicant to demonstrate that the operation of the premises involved will not add to the cumulative impact already being experienced.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate her Department has made of the number of objections from local residents to applications for premises licences or variations under the Licensing Act 2003. [18199]

James Purnell: Information on the number of objections there have been from local residents to applications for premises licences or variations under the Licensing Act 2003 is not held centrally but can be obtained from local authority licensing authorities. From our latest survey of a sample of licensing authorities we estimate that a quarter of applications to vary, or new premises licence applications, have attracted representations from local residents.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate the Government have made of the number of licensing appeals that have been heard by magistrates courts under the Licensing Act 2003. [18200]

James Purnell: Information on the number of licensing appeals that have been heard by magistrates courts under the Licensing Act 2003 is not held centrally but can be obtained from local magistrates courts or from licensing authorities. The transitional period under the 2003 Act is only part way through and it is too early to know exactly how many cases will go to appeal. However, from our latest survey of a sample of licensing authorities, the initial evidence is that the vast majority of applications are being resolved at hearings or earlier.

London Bombings

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans her Department has to commemorate those who lost their lives in the London bombings on 7 July; and if she will make a statement. [15563]

Tessa Jowell: A national memorial service, to remember the victims of the London Bombings on the 7 July 2005, will be held on 1 November at St Paul's Cathedral. The families and friends of those who died and were injured in the attacks will be joined by senior

members of the Royal Household and Government, as well as representatives from the emergency and transport services.

Lottery Awards

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many Lottery awards have been made in coalfield local authority areas using the classification employed in Fair distribution of Lottery funding to coalfields and other areas for each year since 1997; how much was awarded to such areas in each year; what those figures represent per 10,000 population in each case; and if she will make a statement. [18658]

Mr. Caborn: The information is given in the table. The figures are aggregates for the 11 coalfield local authority areas of Ashfield, Barnsley, Blyth Valley, Bolsover, Doncaster, Kirklees, Rotherham, St Helens, Wakefield, Wansbeck and Wigan.

The information is derived from the Department's Lottery award database. This is searchable at www.lottery.culture.gsi.gov.uk, and uses information supplied by the Lottery distributors.

	Number of awards	*Total value of awards (£000 rounded)*	*Value of awards (£000, rounded) per 10,000 population (using 2001 Census figures)*
1997	327	55,247	244
1998	163	21,778	96
1999	642	45,792	203
2000	915	25,937	115
2001	852	45,931	203
2002	1,013	86,378	382
2003	1,044	58,722	260
2004	955	46,061	204
2005[1]	538	10,955	48

[1] To date.

Scheduled Monument Consent

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will seek to legislate to amend the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 to require public consultation when there is an application for scheduled monument consent. [18504]

Mr. Lammy: The issue of public consultation for scheduled monument consent is being considered as part of the Heritage Protection Review and proposals will be outlined in the proposed White Paper, expected in spring 2006. This will include proposals on the future of listed building consent, scheduled monument consent and marine consents.

Sport England

Jim Dowd: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people have participated in Sport England's World Class Performers initiative; and how many of those are *(a)* UK nationals and *(b)* other nationals. [18684]

Mr. Caborn: Around 4,000 athletes have participated in Sport England World Class Programmes since they were introduced in 1997. All athletes were UK nationals, as the programme only supports those athletes eligible to compete for Great Britain.

Video-conferencing

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many video-conferencing units are installed in *(a)* the Department, and *(b)* each agency of the Department; what percentage of offices have these facilities in each case; and what plans there are to increase this proportion. [17905]

Mr. Lammy: The information is as follows.

(a): One

(b): None

There are no plans to increase the quantity of this equipment.

Volunteering

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many volunteering positions her Department has offered in each of the last five years. [17868]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport does not employ volunteers to work within the organisation, although many of DCMS's Non Departmental Public Bodies make significant use of volunteers. The Department does, however, actively encourage its staff to participate in voluntary activities. For example, we allow up to five days paid voluntary leave per year and actively promote volunteering opportunities. DCMS staff are currently involved in activities such as prison visiting, counselling and reading in schools.

Watermark Project

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether her Department has joined the Watermark project. [17909]

Mr. Lammy: The Department joined the Watermark Project in 2002, in respect of all of its four sites. But it soon became apparent to ADSM plc, who the Watermark Project appointed to advise departments on water usage reductions, that due to the measures that DCMS had already put in place it could not offer help in further reducing the DCMS's water consumption. ADSM plc therefore advised DCMS that it would not benefit from continuing membership of the project.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 19 October 2005

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Council/Social Housing

9. **Bob Russell:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what action he has taken since May 1997 to encourage local authorities to build council houses. [19118]

The Deputy Prime Minister: The ODPM five year plan "Homes for All" set out three ways in which local authorities can be involved in delivering new social housing:

The expanded PFI;

funding building by housing associations; and,

bidding in partnership with private developers for funding from the Housing Corporation.

We expect the first of these to produce at least 6000 homes by 2008 worth around £500 million through a combination of new build and estate remodelling.

12. **Kitty Ussher:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the level of public funding for social housing was in *(a)* 2005 and *(b)* 1997. [19121]

Yvette Cooper: Government housing capital investment totalled £4.5 billion in 2004–05 and £1.8 billion in 1997–98.

These figures include £2.9 billion in 2004–05 and £1.1 billion in 1997–98 made available to local authorities mainly for the maintenance and improvement of existing council housing, and £1.6 billion in 2004–05 and £0.7 billion in 1997–98 to registered social landlords (via the Housing Corporation) mainly to increase the supply of new social homes.

Telecommunications Masts

10. **Sir Nicholas Winterton:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to review planning policy relating to telecommunications masts. [19119]

Yvette Cooper: We are currently commissioning research on the future need for communications masts. This will help inform the General Permitted Development Order review which is looking at permitted development rights for mobile phone masts. We also commissioned a review of the code of best practice on mobile phone network development which will be published shortly.

Affordable Housing (South-East)

11. **Laura Moffatt:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what progress he is making in ensuring that affordable housing is available in the South East. [19120]

Yvette Cooper: Proposals for the use of the housing investment funds available to the South East for 2006–07 and 2007–08 were submitted by the Regional Housing Board in July. These proposals, which have been approved, involve a significant increase in funding for affordable housing.

The greater provision of affordable housing is dependent on improved levels of housing supply. Government are therefore working with local authorities to make sure that housing completion rates are built to planned levels. It will announce how it intends to respond to the recommendations of the Barker report later this year.

Roadside Advertising

13. **Ben Chapman:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent representations he has received from members of the public concerning roadside advertising. [19122]

Yvette Cooper: Since May 2005, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has received correspondence concerning roadside advertisements from 20 Members of Parliament on behalf of their constituents and about 175 representations from members of the public.

Key Worker Living Scheme

14. **Barbara Follett:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the effects of the key worker living scheme on recruitment and retention of public sector workers. [19123]

Yvette Cooper: An evaluation of the key worker living scheme is currently underway, with the final report due in 2006. However, early interim findings published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on 31 August found that the scheme is making a positive contribution towards improving recruitment and retention of key workers, such as teachers, nurses and police.

Council Tax

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much revenue was raised in council tax in England in each year since its creation; and what the estimated figure is for 2005–06. [17353]

Mr. Woolas: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave on 16 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 542W and on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 383–5W.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what role *(a)* the Valuation Office Agency played in the council tax revaluation in Wales and *(b)* is planned for the Agency in a future council tax revaluation in England; and if he will make a statement. [17643]

Mr. Woolas: *(a)* In accordance with their statutory duty, under Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by Local Government Act 2003), the Valuation Office Agency's listing officers in Wales compiled the new valuation lists for each billing authority, effective from 1 April 2005, by placing 1.3 million properties into the new council tax bands.

(b) The Valuation Office Agency's listing officers in England currently have a statutory duty, under Local Government Finance Act 1992, to compile and maintain the council tax lists for each billing authority area. The Government has no proposals for any change

in that role, but has announced that the revaluation planned for 2007 is to be postponed and is bringing forward legislation to give that statutory effect.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the likely cost of the council tax rebanding exercise in England. [19478]

Mr. Woolas: The postponement of council tax revaluation in England, which the Government announced on 20 September, means a suspension of the existing programme of preparatory work for the 2007 revaluation by the Valuation Office Agency. It is not possible at this stage to estimate exactly what the costs of revaluation will be at that future date. This will need to be reviewed in the light of the Government's decisions, following the report of the extended Lyons Inquiry into local government funding.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Valuation Office Agency will continue to work on the council tax revaluation in England. [17306]

Mr. Woolas: The Government announced on 20 September 2005 the postponement of the council tax revaluation in England in 2007 and the standing down of preparatory work. The Valuation Office Agency are reviewing in the light of this announcement what steps should be taken to capitalise on their preparatory work to date.

Departmental Bodies

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list *(a)* public relations consultancies and *(b)* public affairs consultancies employed by (i) the Audit Commission and (ii) the Standards Board for England in each year since 2001. [17234]

Mr. Woolas: I will ask the chief executives of the Audit Commission and the Standards Board for England to write to the hon. Member with the information requested. Their responses will be placed in the Library of the House.

Departmental Websites

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the value for money of his Department's website; and if he will make a statement. [15573]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The ODPM website was procured as the result of a fair and open competition. In awarding the contract all tenders were evaluated and the successful tender was deemed to have achieved the best balance on price and satisfying the detailed requirements criteria.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 17 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 806W. Unique visitors to the ODPM website have more than doubled since its launch. The website also helps ODPM to fulfil its commitment to Freedom of Information, with more than 300 publications and nearly 300 press releases and statements uploaded to the website in 2004–05. ODPM is therefore continuing to develop the corporate website as a value for money channel for government information.

Electricity Spending

Tim Loughton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much each departmental site has spent on electricity in each year since 2001. [18849]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was formed in May 2002 and the following figures reflect this.

£

Electricity spend by site	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Ashdown House (HQ)	201,523	202,579	241,463
Eland House (HQ)	167,505	239,538	276,101
Hempstead House (HQ)	[1]—	8,123	8,953
Planning Inspectorate	105,941	119,960	117,047
Queen Elizabeth II CC	228,636	330,450	416,173
Fire Service College	128,000	143,840	181,925
The Rent Service	100,013	188,204	[2]—
	931,618	1,232,694	1,241,662

[1] Not known.
[2] The Rent Service transferred to The Department for Works and Pensions in April 2004.

This answer does not include figures for 26 Whitehall, which is managed by the Cabinet Office, and for which the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister pays an agreed proportion of the cost of all services supplied by the Cabinet Office.

The figures for 2004–05 have yet to be independently verified by DEFRA and therefore should be considered as provisional.

This answer does not include the buildings occupied by Government Offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

Energy Efficiency

Tim Loughton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what energy-saving measures he has implemented in his Department since it was established. [18850]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has implemented a wide range of energy saving measures since its inception in May 2002.

These include an energy awareness campaign for staff and improved monitor ring and targeting of energy use and benchmarking as well as physical measures such as:

Implementing variable speed drives to supply and extract fans

Lowering the temperature setting of main boilers controls

Improved building management controls

Improved lighting controls in office space

Providing timers for hot water boilers and empty refrigerated display units to reduce out of hours electrical consumption

We have worked with the Carbon Trust in the past year to use their expertise to identify both short and medium term projects to improve our use of energy, promote more efficient use of energy and reduce our CO_2 emissions. These plans will be implemented and progress monitored.

Local Authority Expenditure

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the revenue expenditure of each local authority in England was in the most recent year for which figures are available. [17160]

Mr. Woolas: Revenue expenditure in 2004–05 by local authority in England can be found on the ODPM website at: http://www.localodpm.gov.uk/finance/stats/revenue.htm.

Data are not available for a small number of local authorities as their returns were invalid at the time of processing the 2004–05 data. Final data are expected to become available towards the end of 2005.

A table has been placed in the House Library showing revenue expenditure for each local authority in 2003–04.

Local Government Ombudsman

Anne Milton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations he has received about reform of the Local Government Ombudsman over the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [17720]

Mr. Woolas: The Office has received around 50 representations relating to the work of the Local Government Ombudsman over the past 12 months. We do not keep records of the precise nature of the representations received. This information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Local Government Pensions

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on progress of the negotiations on the Local Government Pension Scheme. [19487]

Mr. Woolas: Good progress is being made by the local authority employers and trade unions, within the framework of the Local Government Pension Scheme Tripartite Committee, to determine what further amendments are necessary to the scheme, so that, in light of my statement of 13 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 30–31WS, its on-going affordability and viability can be ensured by April 2006. A further meeting of the Tripartite Committee is scheduled for 2 November.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate has been made of the funding shortfall in local authorities pension funds in England. [17402]

Mr. Woolas: The actuarial valuation of the local authority pension funds in England carried out on 31 March 2004, showed that the assets of £80 billion represented 75 per cent. of the total scheme liabilities of £107 billion. Each scheme administering authority has in place a funding strategy to manage and recover fund deficits.

Maladministration

Anne Milton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which local authorities have been found guilty of maladministration in each of the past 10 years. [17719]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested is provided in the annual reports of the Local Government Ombudsman, copies of which are placed in the Library of the House.

Public Toilets

Dr. Cable: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what discussions his Department has had with the British Toilet Association on the subject of toilets in public places; and what the outcome was of those discussions; [17836]

(2) what steps he plans to take to encourage local authorities to provide and maintain a suitable quantity and quality of toilets in public places; [17852]

(3) if he will introduce legislation to oblige local authorities to maintain a basic provision of public toilets; [17853]

(4) what regulations are in place stipulating *(a)* standards of cleanliness in and *(b)* maintenance, of public toilets; [17854]

(5) what regulations are in place relating to the quantity and quality of public toilets required for disabled people. [17855]

Mr. Woolas: I met with the British Toilet Association on 11 October to discuss methods of disseminating good practice in public toilet provision. It was agreed that the BTA would work with ODPM to promote guidance, including examples of best practice, as part of the 'How To Manage Town Centres' guide produced under the Cleaner Safer Greener Communities cross-Government initiative led by ODPM. The Government will also consider with the BTA ways in which access to toilets in public places can be further encouraged, but will not be introducing legislation to impose a duty on local authorities.

The standards of cleanliness in and maintenance of public toilets are a matter of public health and are therefore subject to public health regulation. The design of public toilets required for disabled people is regulated by Part M of the Building Regulations, which specifies overall design, layout, fixtures and fittings of toilets suitable for use by disabled people. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 places a duty on service providers to make reasonable adjustments to the physical features of a building which make accessing a service impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people. There is no duty on central Government to monitor the availability or standards of public toilet provision for disabled people.

South West Regional Assembly

Martin Horwood: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has for elections to the South West Regional Assembly. [17528]

Yvette Cooper: The Government has no plans for elections to the South West Regional Assembly.

Volunteering

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many volunteering positions his Department has offered in each of the last five years. [17870]

Jim Fitzpatrick: ODPM was created in May 2002 and hence our answer can only cover the period between that date and the present.

ODPM allows staff to take special leave with pay to participate in a range of voluntary/public services in accordance with the organisations staff handbook. However, the information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

In terms of bringing in volunteers to the organisation, ODPM does not currently use volunteers to deliver its services within its Head Office.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agricultural Land

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of recent trends in the value of agricultural land. [16487]

Jim Knight: The following table shows estimated agricultural land prices in England for the last 10 years. These are derived from data for all sales of agricultural land in England and give an indication of the trend in land values. They exclude land sold for non-agricultural purposes and sales of less than five hectares.

England agricultural land prices

	£ per hectare
1995	4,788
1996	6,058
1997	6,448
1998	6,134
1999	6,673
2000	7,082
2001	7,406
2002	6,896
2003	7,023
2004	7,745

Animal Husbandry

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of male cattle she estimates were shot within one month of birth in the last period for which figures are available. [17229]

Mr. Bradshaw: No official statistics are available on the number of male animals under one month old disposed of on farm. Based on estimates of numbers of male dairy calves produced in 2004 (roughly 480,000) it is estimated that approximately 80 per cent. were disposed of on farm.

Avian Influenza

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what surveillance and protection measures are in place to deal with a potential outbreak of avian influenza; and if she will make a statement. [18212]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government has significantly enhanced the arrangements for surveillance of wild birds, including the investigation of die-offs and sampling at shoots and wetlands. The arrangements have been agreed as part of co-ordinated efforts across the European Union. The EU has also banned all imports of birds and poultry-related products, except processed feathers, from countries affected by highly pathogenic avian influenza. Her Majesty's Customs and Revenue are enhancing checks of luggage of passengers travelling from Romania and Turkey. The Government is well-prepared to manage an outbreak of avian influenza with a published detailed contingency plan in place.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much the Department has spent on research into avian influenza in each of the last five years. [19141]

Mr. Bradshaw: Over the last five years the Department has doubled the amount invested into research activity on avian influenza, from £226,000 during 2001–02, to £463,000 budgeted during 2005–06.

£000

Financial year	*Budget*
2001–02	226
2002–03	227
2003–04	234
2004–05	382
2005–06	463

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the symptoms of avian influenza are; and how they differ in different domestic species. [19143]

Mr. Bradshaw: Avian influenza is a highly contagious disease affecting the respiratory, digestive and/or nervous system of many species of birds. The general symptoms may include loss of appetite, diarrhoea, generalised weakness, swelling of the face and legs, conjunctivitis, nasal discharge, blue discolouration of the skin or membranes, a drop in egg production, sneezing, coughing and laboured respiration. In disease caused by highly virulent types of virus, there may be no warning signs, with birds either being found dead or dying suddenly. The presenting clinical signs in different domestic species are influenced by husbandry conditions (e.g. whether birds are housed or not) and by the presence of intercurrent bacterial or other viral diseases.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the number of vets who are qualified to identify avian influenza. [19144]

Mr. Bradshaw: All veterinary surgeons should be competent to identify the signs associated with avian influenza and take any samples required for laboratory confirmation of disease. The state veterinary service trains all its veterinary staff in the recognition of clinical signs of exotic diseases, including avian influenza.

The British Veterinary Association has circulated very comprehensive advice to its members to aid identification of suspect cases and this advice incorporates the views of specialist veterinarians working with poultry on a regular basis.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the requirement for protective *(a)* clothing and *(b)* equipment for (i) poultry farmers and (ii) other keepers of birds to deal with avian influenza. [19146]

Mr. Bradshaw: Worker protection and requirements for personal protective equipment are public health matters for the Health and Safety Executive, Department of Health and Health Protection Agency to advise on.

This Department is however fully committed to ensuring that sound practical and risk based guidance is available to the keepers of poultry and other birds. A joint poultry industry and cross departmental working group, chaired by DEFRA, has been established and will publish guidance by the end of October.

Carbon Emissions

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether it remains Government policy that action to tackle climate change post-2012 should include mandatory national targets for reductions in carbon emissions. [17178]

Mr. Morley: The UK Government and the EU remain committed to the framework set out by the Kyoto protocol. It remains crucially important, as the first ever legally binding framework, to set quantified emissions reductions for developed countries. The UK Government and the EU want to build on the Kyoto protocol and its key elements such as targets and timetables, monitoring and reporting, compliance and the flexibility mechanisms for the period after 2012.

In addition, on the basis of the European Commission's communication "Winning the battle against global climate change" (February 2005) the European Council of Ministers concluded that the EU's future climate change strategy should:

(a) Strive at the widest possible cooperation by all countries;

(b) Include all important greenhouse gases, sectors and mitigation options;

(c) Drive technological innovation, employing an optimal mix of "push" and "pull" policies, in particular in the transport and energy sector;

(d) Promote the transfer of technologies to appropriate markets;

(e) Provide for the continued use of market-based and flexible instruments, and;

(f) Support the adaptation to unavoidable climate change in all countries, particularly in the most vulnerable developing countries.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she has taken to ensure the accuracy of the inventory of UK carbon emissions; and if she will make a statement on the different methodologies used. [17180]

Mr. Morley: The inventory of UK greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (including carbon dioxide) is compiled according to the guidance issued by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Accuracy checks on the UK inventory are conducted as follows:

Inventory data compiled by our contractor are subject to an audited quality control and assurance programme. This ensures that the data sources are reliable and quality checked, that the choice of methodologies is transparent, that data are consistent over time, complete, comparable, and assessed for uncertainties. When required, methodological changes are made to take account of new data sources, or new guidance from the IPCC, relevant work by other international organisations, new research, or specific research programmes sponsored by Defra. Such improvements to the methodology are applied retrospectively to ensure a consistent time series of emissions.

Defra periodically tests the accuracy of key source sector estimates in the national inventory by means of independent peer review. Reviews completed to date include carbon dioxide from fossil fuel combustion and agriculture. Defra also funds independent verification of the reliability of the emissions estimates by combining measurements of the concentrations of selected GHGs at Mace Head in Ireland and a model of atmospheric transport developed by the Met Office.

Each year the GHG inventory is subject to annual reviews by trained expert reviewers working on behalf of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). These reviews are a thorough cross-check of the accuracy and reliability of country estimates, and are designed to underpin the integrity of the convention process and the Kyoto protocol.

Common Agricultural Policy

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the representations she has received concerning the effect of Common Agricultural Policy subsidy reductions on sugar cane on the sugar cane industry in Swaziland. [17936]

Jim Knight: In February of this year the then Minister for Food and Farming, Lord Whitty, met the Prime Minister of Swaziland to discuss the reform of the EU sugar regime and its impact on Swaziland. The Secretary of State, in her capacity as President of the EU Agriculture Council, has chaired a meeting between the Agriculture Council and representatives of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (ACPs) and the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in Brussels on 19 September. Swaziland was represented at that meeting at ministerial level. Several meetings have taken place with ACP representatives to discuss sugar reform at both ministerial and Official level.

The Secretary of State has also received a letter from the Chief Executive Officer of the Swaziland Sugar Association concerning the proposed reforms of the EU sugar regime. In addition DEFRA has received several letters concerning the reforms from ACP countries collectively and received a large number of letters from members of the public concerned about development issues arising from the proposed reforms.

Dog Registration

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will implement a dog registration scheme to fund stray animal care. [17452]

Mr. Bradshaw: We have no plans to introduce a dog registration scheme. Funding for stray dogs will come from existing budgets and those received from the police, as well as dog owners themselves. Dog owners

are required to pay £25 on top of the cost accrued for maintaining their dog while in the custody of the local authority.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas Agreements

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effects on farmers of the ending of the environmentally sensitive areas agreements. [19496]

Jim Knight: The Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) scheme began in 1987 when farmers were offered 10-year agreements to protect and enhance the flora and fauna on their land. The Government have always encouraged farmers to enter into another agreement at the end of their existing 10-year agreement. The Environmental Stewardship (ES) scheme, introduced this year, comprises the new Entry Level Stewardship, which is open to all farmers in England, and the more targeted Higher Level Stewardship. Higher Level Stewardship will replace the ESA and Countryside Stewardship (CSS) schemes, which were closed to new applicants in 2004.

Under ES, the Government will continue their policy of encouraging farmers to enter into new agreements when their previous ESA and CSS agreements expire. This year an additional one million hectares has already been brought into ES, bringing the total area in these schemes to 2.3 million hectares. The Government have also made available an extra £150 million a year for new ES agreements.

Flood Defences (Oxfordshire)

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the flood mitigation measures on Lakes H and I at Radley Lakes, Oxfordshire; and whether measures are planned to improve the operation of the sluice gates there. [18297]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency is the principal authority responsible for flood risk management in England and, as part of this, advises local planning authorities on flood risk with respect to planning applications.

A private company—RWE npower—is responsible for managing these lakes and for any flood mitigation measures associated with them. The Agency recently advised Oxfordshire county council on flood risk with respect to a planning application from RWE npower relating to Lakes H and I.

Following discussion with the Agency, RWE npower revised their proposal to address Agency concerns, specifically on the ability of the lakes to store flood water and the sizing of flood relief pipes to allow flood water to pass into the lakes at a suitable rate to alleviate flooding in the Radley area.

The Agency is not aware of any proposal to alter operation of the sluice gates.

Foot and Mouth

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which countries undergoing a foot and mouth disease outbreak are subject to import control measures initiated by the UK; and if she will make a statement. [18214]

Mr. Bradshaw: The rules for imports of meat are the subject of EU rules. Imports are not permitted from countries or areas of countries where foot and mouth disease (FMD) is endemic.

The UK has not initiated any import control measures on any countries which are undergoing a foot and mouth disease outbreak, other than those initiated by the European Commission.

Following a recent outbreak of FMD in Brazil, imports of bovine meat and offal from the regions of Mato Grosso do Sul, Parana, and Sao Paulo, have been banned.

Foot and Mouth Disease (Brazil)

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on reports of an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in Brazil; and what steps she is taking to restrict beef imports from that country. [19126]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 18 October 2005]:* The Brazilian authorities reported an outbreak of foot and mouth disease on the 8 October 2005.

The EU Commission advised member states of the outbreak in the Brazilian state of Mato Grosso du Sol on 10 October 2005 and advised that a meeting to discuss a proposal to ban imports of meat and offal from the affected Brazilian States would be held on the 12 October 2005.

We applied measures implementing the ban in line with the EU proposal on the 11 October 2005.

Following discussion in Brussels on 12 October 2005 revised measures were agreed banning imports from Mato Grosso du Sol, São Paulo and Parana. We amended our measures to reflect these changes on 13 October 2005.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which countries have suspended imports of Brazilian beef following the reported outbreak of foot and mouth in Brazil. [19225]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 18 October 2005]:* All EU member states are taking the same action—banning the import of fresh de-boned and matured bovine meat and the offal from bovine animals from the Brazilian states of Mato Grosso du Sol, São Paulo and Parana.

Other non EU countries will be aware of the situation in the Brazilian States and will be taking action of their own. However, we have no record of the actions taken by non EU countries.

Gamebirds

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will introduce legislation to ban the production of gamebirds for the purpose of shooting them for sport. [16873]

Mr. Bradshaw: No.

Herbicides

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact on *(a)* farmers and *(b)* the environment of herbicide resistance in wild plants; and if she will make a statement. [17141]

Mr. Morley: Herbicide resistance in weeds and other wild plants can occur naturally over time as a response to exposure to certain herbicides. It is an agronomic problem well known to farmers, agronomists and the crop protection industry all over the world. Responsible use of herbicides can mitigate the problem.

In the wider environment beyond the cropped areas of farms, herbicide tolerant weeds are not normally an issue as herbicides are not routinely used in such areas.

The approval and use of herbicides is closely regulated to ensure protection of the environment.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to prevent the spread of the herbicide tolerant gene found in charlock in the Government's farm-scale evaluation; and if she will make a statement. [17142]

Mr. Morley: Researchers from the Centre for Hydrology and Ecology were commissioned by Defra to monitor for gene flow between the GM crops grown in the farm-scale evaluations and wild plants. Over 60,000 charlock seeds and 700 charlock plants were checked. The researchers reported the possible finding of a single hybrid between oilseed rape and the wild plant charlock (the scientists were unable to confirm that it was in fact a hybrid). The researchers returned to the site the following year and found no trace of any charlock plants carrying the herbicide tolerant gene. This was to be expected as I am advised that even if a hybrid charlock plant existed it would be unlikely to produce fertile seed and would not persist.

There are therefore no immediate implications of this research. The results of this study have been passed to the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment and will be used along with other information in assessment of any future proposals to grow GM oilseed rape. We have also commissioned a review of the risks associated with the cultivation of herbicide tolerant oilseed rape, with emphasis on hybridization with wild relatives which is due for completion at the end of the year.

Incinerators

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to build and develop an incinerator in Dungeness; and if she will make a statement. [17569]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government encourage all local authorities to have in place a strategy for managing their municipal waste. However, it is for individual local authorities and not DEFRA to decide on the strategy that best suits their needs relating to waste and the particular waste management options (which may include generating energy from waste) employed within that strategy.

Newcastle Disease

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on how the recent outbreak of Newcastle Disease was dealt with. [18217]

Mr. Bradshaw: The outbreak of Newcastle Disease in pheasants in Surrey in July 2005 was dealt with according to the published Defra Contingency Plan. A national disease control centre was established in London and a local disease control centre was set up in Reigate to manage the local response. The control policy was implemented quickly, the birds on the infected premises were culled, movement restrictions were imposed to limit the risk of disease spread and surveillance was carried out in the local area to detect any signs of disease. The outbreak was limited to one premises.

Rapid exchanges of information with the French authorities identified the farms in France that had supplied birds to the infected premises. Newcastle Disease was subsequently confirmed on one premises in France and the authorities took appropriate action.

Dialogue with the European Commission and other EU member states was maintained and there was close liaison with third countries to keep them up to date with developments and seek to minimise the impact on trade. The game bird and poultry industries and other stakeholders were kept fully informed. All restrictions on and around the infected premises have now been lifted.

A report on lessons learned from the outbreak will be published in November.

Nuclear Waste

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the Government's policy is on storing nuclear waste. [19388]

Mr. Morley: The UK Government and devolved Administrations set up the independent Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM) in 2003, under the Managing Radioactive Waste Safely programme.

The task for CoRWM is to recommend an option, or combination of options for the long-term management of the UK's higher level activity radioactive waste.

CoRWM began its third phase of its Public and Stakeholder Engagement consultation programme in August 2005, assessing the four short-listed options:

- Deep geological disposal
- Phased deep geological disposal
- Near-surface disposal of short-lived waste
- Long-term interim storage

CoRWM will provide its recommendations to Ministers, for their consideration, in July 2006.

Oceans

Linda Gilroy: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent advice she has received on ocean acidification and its impact on marine biodiversity and climate change. [17366]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* In June this year The Royal Society published a report on the potential problems of ocean acidification as a result of increased concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. This drew attention to the potential increase in acidity of the oceans which may occur over the next few centuries. This acidification has already been observed, although the full impacts on marine biodiversity are still relatively unknown.

The Department, jointly with DTI, is actively funding research at the Plymouth Marine Laboratory (PML) in the North Sea to investigate the potential impact of increased seawater acidity on shallow sea ecosystems, biodiversity and the health of key organisms, including their capacity to adapt. This will enable us to better understand and predict the consequences of the increasing acidity of seawater. Full details of all related research can be found on the DEFRA website (http://www2.defra.gov.uk/research/project_data/).

The OSPAR Commission for the protection of the marine environment of the North East Atlantic has begun work on an assessment of the implications of increased carbon dioxide levels for our waters. The United Kingdom will be contributing to this work, drawing on the results of the Royal Society study and of the work at PML.

In March 2005 my colleague, the Minister of State for Environment (Mr. Morley), launched a new partnership called the Marine Climate Change Information Partnership (MCCIP) to co-ordinate the evidence resulting from investigations into the impacts of climate change on our marine environment. Ocean acidification is one of the issues it intends to address.

Off-roading

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent representations she has received regarding *(a)* antisocial and *(b)* illegal off-roading by people with motorised vehicles. [18792]

Jim Knight: We have received a significant number of representations regarding the antisocial and illegal off-road use of motorised vehicles.

There already exists a range of statutory powers that, when used as part of a co-ordinated strategy, can prove effective in dealing with the inappropriate use of motor vehicles off-road. The Government will shortly be issuing guidance to help the police and local authorities tackle motor vehicle misuse. The guidance will set out the range of powers already available and will draw on existing best practice examples of police and local authorities working in successful partnerships.

Copies of this guidance will be placed in the Library of the House.

Organophosphates

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to reduce exposure to organophosphates, with particular reference to those involved in agriculture. [18403]

Mr. Bradshaw: Organophosphates (OPs) are used in agriculture in both veterinary medicines and pesticides. All veterinary medicinal and plant protection products, including organophosphate products are subject to stringent regulatory control.

The Government takes the safety of OPs very seriously and has funded a number of research projects into the effects in humans of exposure to OPs. Current research has concluded that there is insufficient evidence to support a link between chronic low-level exposure to OPs and ill health effects in humans. Some studies remain to be completed and the results of all the studies will be reviewed on their completion. We will also review our policy on OPs in light of these results.

In addition to this Defra has funded Research and Development projects on the development of non-chemical alternatives for the control of sheep scab. The research into alternatives are complex long-term projects and if they do lead to the development of viable alternative products it is unlikely that such products will be available for at least five and probably 10 years.

The Pesticides Safety Directorate also supports on-going R and D into less toxic and more environmentally benign alternatives for crop protection, either substituting for existing active ingredients or as part of broader Integrated Farm Management approaches. Again it will take some time before products based on this research are likely to be commercially available.

In 1998 a UK review programme of organophosphates used as plant protection products was announced and 40 organophosphates were identified for review. Although companies supported 21, there are now only nine approved organophosphate active substances in about 60 products. Partly as a result of this programme there has been a significant decline, to about 25 per cent. of the 1994 levels, in the use of organophosphate plant protection products.

Details of veterinary medicines and plant protection research can be found on the Defra www.defra.gov.uk website.

Provided they are used according to their statutory conditions of use, plant protection products and veterinary medicines containing OPs should pose no unacceptable risk to operators, bystanders or consumers of the treated produce and as such there is no current scientific rationale for further restricting their use as a precautionary public health measure.

Scrapie

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on progress on the National Scrapie Plan. [18213]

Mr. Bradshaw: The National Scrapie Plan continues to make good progress. The voluntary Ram Genotyping Scheme is continuing to recruit new members and there has been encouraging progress in improving genotype profiles in participating flocks. We are working to implement the Compulsory Ram Genotyping Scheme during 2006, taking into account the results of a strategic review last year. Targeted action in scrapie affected flocks is continuing in line with t he EU rules

and we are taking the opportunity of discussions in Brussels of the Commission's TSE Roadmap to press for changes to the scheme.

Sewage Treatment

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much sewage was disposed in the Channel in each of the last five years; and what plans she has to develop sewage treatment facilities in East Sussex. [17567]

Mr. Morley: Information on the yearly volume of sewage disposed of in the English Channel (East Kent (Dover) to Cornwall) is not held centrally and could not be provided without disproportionate cost.

Southern Water Services Limited, which provides sewerage services for East and West Sussex, Kent, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, estimates that 28.3 million m^3 of preliminary treated effluent is discharged from Brighton per year. Preliminary treatment means that the sewage passes through screens before discharge to the sea.

Southern Water have applied for planning permission and discharge consents to upgrade the sewage treatment facilities serving Brighton to at least secondary treatment. When these are received we expect Southern Water to complete the approved sewage treatment scheme as soon as practicable.

The estimated total volume of secondary treated effluent discharged directly to the English Channel and the Solent by Southern Water is 140.2 million m^3 per year. Secondary treatment is the normal standard of treatment that sewage receives before discharge.

Sheep Dip

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what evaluation she has made of research by *(a)* UK organisations, *(b)* the UK Government and *(c)* other EU member states into alternatives to using cypermethrin in sheep dip. [17897]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government are aware of reports from the Environment Agency of environmental pollution incidents caused by the use of cypermethrin sheep dips. The Veterinary Medicines Directorate and Environment Agency are jointly working towards developing a pollution reduction plan. As part of this plan they recently held a meeting of various interested groups from farming organisations, environmental non-government organisations with interests in fishing and wildlife, sheep dip manufacturers, the wool scouring industry and NAWAD.

The main alternatives to the use of cypermethrin sheep dips in the UK contain the active substance diazinon which is an organophosphate. These products have a record of known efficacy over many years. However, users must respect the recommended precautions to ensure their safe use.

DEFRA has funded four research and development projects on the development of non-chemical alternatives for the control of sheep scab. All four of these projects have been completed and three continuation projects are currently being funded to develop further the advances made on immunological (vaccine) and biological (entomopathogenic fungi) control methods. These are complex long-term projects and if they do lead to the development of viable alternative products it is unlikely that such products will be available for at least five and probably 10 years. Details of this research can be found on the DEFRA (www.defra.gov.uk) and VMD (www.vmd.gov.uk) websites.

The Government are not aware of any research by other UK organisations or EU member states into the alternatives to using cypermethrin in sheep dips.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has for an alternatives to organophosphates for sheep dips; and what research the Department has funded on this. [18453]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra has funded four Research and Development projects on the development of non-chemical alternatives for the control of sheep scab. All four of these projects have been completed and three continuation projects are currently being funded to develop further the advances made on immunological (vaccine) and biological (entomopathogenic fungi) control methods. These are complex long term projects and if they do lead to the development of viable alternative products it is unlikely that such products will be available for at least five and probably 10 years.

Details of this research can be found on the Defra (www.defra.gov.uk) and Veterinary Medicines Directorate (www.vmd.gov.uk) websites.

Veterinary Medicines

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she plans to introduce the recommendations in the Competition Commission's report on prescription-only veterinary medicines. [18215]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government carefully considered the recommendations made by the Competition Commission in their report on the supply of prescription-only medicines in the UK. Defra's formal response to these recommendations was issued on 9 July 2003 and is available on the Veterinary Medicines Directorate's (VMD) website (www.vmd.gov.uk) under "Publications, General", 9 July 2003, *Official Report*, column 53WS.

Those recommendations which were accepted by the Government have been carried forward within the recent comprehensive revision of the UK veterinary medicines legislation and the recommendations requiring changes to legislation on veterinary medicines are included in the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2005 (SI 2745) that are due to come into force on 30 October 2005.

The recommendation that a review of distribution classifications of marketing authorisations has been addressed by a three month public consultation from 27 July 2005 requesting interested parties to submit cases for the review of the classification of individual products or product groups. The consultation closes on 19 October and all interested parties will be consulted

again on proposals to change any product's distribution category. Details of the consultation are available on the VMD website under "Consultations, Current".

Volunteering

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many volunteering positions her Department has offered in each of the last five years. [17872]

Jim Knight: DEFRA currently offers all staff one day's paid special leave each year for volunteering. However, central records are not kept of staff who apply for special leave for this purpose. Consequently, to provide the information requested would incur disproportionate cost.

DEFRA encourages its staff to volunteer in their own time, either with charities or with voluntary community organisations in their own area as this helps to support the Departments main aim: Sustainable Development.

DEFRA's internal website includes links to a number of organisations with which the Department has had contact or with which staff are currently already volunteering. The list of organisations will be added to in the future.

Water

Mr. Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures she is taking to *(a)* reduce water abstraction and *(b)* increase river flows during the summer months; and if she will make a statement. [18551]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency is the statutory body with a duty to manage water resources in England and Wales. The principal mechanism for achieving sustainable management and development of water resources is through the Agency's system of abstraction licensing.

Many abstraction licences will have a condition that means abstraction must cease if the river flow or depth falls below a specified value. In addition the Environment Agency can place a ban on abstractions by spray irrigators, if this becomes necessary.

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, can make a drought order, on application by the Environment Agency or a water undertaker, which contains powers to reduce abstractions by third parties to ensure that supplies can be maintained.

Mr. Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to build new reservoirs in the *(a)* East and *(b)* South East of England; and if she will make a statement. [18554]

Mr. Morley: In fulfilment of their duties to maintain adequate supplies of water, several water companies in southern England propose to enlarge existing reservoirs or construct new ones. These proposals were set out in the 25 year water resources plans they prepared in 2004. The Environment Agency has advised Ministers about the appropriateness of these proposals and other measures to ensure security of supply, in its report "Maintaining water supply", which was published in July 2004. The Department has no plans to build reservoirs.

Mr. Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures are in place to ensure the water needs of the *(a)* East and *(b)* South East of England are met; and if she will make a statement. [18555]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency is the statutory body with a duty to manage water resources in England and Wales. As part of the Agency's management role it has national and regional water resource strategies which set out the pressures over the next 25 years.

Water companies have duties to maintain adequate supplies of water. They have 25 year water resource plans which complement the Agency strategies and seek to reconcile supply with anticipated demand. These water resource plans are produced voluntarily, every five years, at present but will become a statutory requirement under the provisions of the Water Act 2003.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs who is responsible for protecting water supplies from tampering; and what measures are taken to do so. [19375]

Mr. Morley: Water companies are responsible for protecting the public water supply. Their installations and facilities have security precautions in place to protect the treated water supply from tampering and these are continually reviewed by the companies. They also have plans to cater for all types of emergency situations including contamination of supply. It is not the policy of the Department to disclose details of these arrangements or any procedures relating to national security.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Antisocial Behaviour

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he proposes for dealing with antisocial behaviour by children under 10 years. [18847]

Hazel Blears: The Government are determined to ensure that parents take full responsibility for their children's behaviour and are considering a range of measures to do so. We have no plans to introduce antisocial behaviour orders for those aged under 10.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders were issued in the Peterborough city council area in *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003 and *(c)* 2004. [18209]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is available on the Crime Reduction website at www.crimereduction.gov.uk

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many anti-social behaviour orders have been issued in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* each police division in Essex in each of the last three years. [18083]

Hazel Blears: Available information is given in the table.

Antisocial behaviour order data are not available by police division. A table giving a breakdown by the local government authority area in which prohibitions are imposed within orders is available on the Crime Reduction website at www.crimereduction.gov.uk

Antisocial behaviour orders issued in Essex, as notified to the Home Office, by year

	Number issued
2002	2
2003	13
2004	37

Asylum

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what has been the average length of time to determine asylum appeals from the date of being lodged to the date of hearing for appeals lodged *(a)* before and *(b)* after 4 April 2005; and if he will make a statement. [18968]

Bridget Prentice: I have been asked to reply.

The latest provisional information available from the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) indicates that an asylum appeal lodged *(a)* before the 4 April 2005 took on average 33 weeks from first being lodged to a decision being promulgated by an Immigration Adjudicator of the Immigration Appellate Authority (IAA).

Asylum appeals arising from a claim refused by the Home Office prior to the 4 April 2005 were lodged first, in accordance with the Tribunal's procedure rules, with the decision maker, before being transferred to the IAA to be determined by an Immigration Adjudicator.

The latest provisional information available from the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) indicates that an asylum appeal lodged *(b)* after the 4 April 2005 took on average five weeks from being lodged, to a decision being promulgated by an immigration judge of the AIT.

Asylum appeals arising from a claim refused by the Home Office after the 4 April 2005 are lodged directly to the AIT in accordance with Rule 6 of The Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (Procedure) Rules 2005.

British Citizenship

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many persons who have been granted British citizenship since 1 January 2000 had, prior to the granting of British citizenship, been *(a)* found guilty of a criminal offence by a court in the United Kingdom and *(b)* sentenced to a custodial sentence by a court in the United Kingdom. [16346]

Mr. McNulty: All persons applying for naturalisation as a British citizen are required to meet a good character requirement. As part of the naturalisation process a police record check is made into all applicants. A check is also made on older minors who are applying for registration at the Secretary of State's discretion. In assessing whether any previous criminal activity would affect a person's ability to meet the good character requirement, we would take into account the nature of the offence, the age of the offender and the length of time that had elapsed since conviction. If sufficient time free of further offending had not elapsed since the offence, the application would normally be refused.

Between 1 January 2000 and 4 October 2005 765,833 applications for British citizenship have been decided. Of those, 4,947 were refused on character grounds.

Community Support Officers

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is Home Office policy that police community support officers are entitled to be issued with personal protective equipment including anti-stab vests. [17709]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* The issue of personal protective equipment to community support officers (CSOs) is an operational matter for chief officers. Guidance issued by the Association of Chief Police Officers recognises that the issue of body armour to CSOs has become commonplace and that forces should consider issue of this equipment in light of local health and safety assessments.

Crime Statistics

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent estimate he has made of the levels of *(a)* violent crime, *(b)* car crime, *(c)* robbery and *(d)* burglary in Pudsey constituency; and if he will make a statement. [18922]

Hazel Blears: The Pudsey constituency comes within the Leeds Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP). The current levels of recorded offences for the crimes requested are given in the table.

Recorded crimes in the Leeds Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) area: 2004–05

Offence type	Number
Violence against the person	14,784
Sexual offences[1]	823
Robbery	1,202
Violent crime	16,809
Domestic burglary	9,441
Vehicle crime	15,251

[1] The Sexual Offences Act 2003, introduced in May 2004, altered the definition and coverage of sexual offences.

Drug Addiction (Crime)

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment his Department has made of the proportion of crime undertaken as a direct consequence of drug addiction; and if he will make a statement. [16701]

Paul Goggins: Crime statistics used for monitoring overall crime trends such as recorded crime and the British Crime Survey do not contain information about the drug habits of individual offenders or their motivation for offending. It is therefore not possible to provide firm estimates of the total amount of crime undertaken as a direct consequence of addiction.

Findings from the Home Office sponsored New English and Welsh Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring survey programme (NEW-ADAM), in which arrestees in custody suites in 16 high crime areas in England and Wales were interviewed and tested for drugs between 1999 and 2001, found that 38 per cent. of all arrestees included in the survey tested positive for opiates such as heroin, and/or cocaine/crack.

Furthermore, more than one-third (35 per cent.) of all interviewed arrestees were problem drug users (i.e. they reported recent signs of dependence on one or more illicit drug types).

Among those arrestees who reported recent drug dependence, 62 per cent. said that they were dependent on heroin.

Four out of five interviewed arrestees reported the use of at least one illicit drug in the previous 12 months and nearly two-thirds of these drug users said they had committed an acquisitive crime, such as burglary, shoplifting or other theft, during the same period.

Among those who used illicit drugs and had committed an acquisitive crime in the past year 60 per cent. overall said there was some link between their drug use and offending—this rose to 84 per cent. among crack users and 87 per cent. of heroin users. The findings from this study can be accessed via the Research Development and Statistics website at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/drugs_new_adam.html

A new Arrestee Survey is currently being undertaken which will provide more comprehensive and nationally representative information on the proportion of crime that is drug-related in the future.

Environmental Sustainability

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what remit relating to sustainable development is *(a)* required and *(b)* undertaken by bodies for which his Department is responsible; and if he will make a statement. [16313]

Andy Burnham: Advice on sustainable development will be issued shortly to Home Office-sponsored Executive and Advisory non-departmental public bodies (NDPB's) as part of a wider revision of central guidance. The advice will, among other things, explain that NDPBs must consider the responsibilities they have for meeting the Government's commitment to sustainable development. We currently do not collate information about the extent to which NDPBs incorporate sustainable development into their remit, but some do have environmental policies.

EU Travel Bans

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list individuals subject to an EU travel ban who have entered UK territory in the last three years. [16072]

Andy Burnham: This information is not held centrally and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Firearms

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in which regions of the United Kingdom are owners or keepers of soft airguns and low powered airguns, with an energy level in excess of one joule, required to hold a firearm certificate. [18093]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* There is no such requirement in Great Britain except for air weapons declared to be especially dangerous by rules made by the Secretary of State under section 53 of the Firearms Act 1968 i.e. air pistols with a muzzle energy in excess of six ft.lb or air rifles with a muzzle energy in excess of 12 ft.lb. The Act does not extend to Northern Ireland which has its own specific legislation

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will assess the accountability of police forces in England and Wales in their use of firearms. [18534]

Hazel Blears: The use of lethal force by police officers is subject to the same requirements as for any other use of force. In general terms, the Criminal Law Act 1967 provides that the police may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to effect an arrest or to prevent crime. The Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 also provides for the use of force when necessary in exercising any of the powers provided under that Act.

Within the general framework of the law governing the use of force by the police, Chief Officers must have regard to the Statutory Code of Practice on the Police Use of Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons.

The Code is made under the Police Acts of 1996 and 1997. The Code of Practice is backed up by a more detailed Manual of Guidance on Police Use of Firearms produced by the Association of Chief Police Officers which covers the more operational aspects of the use of firearms.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what changes are required to the laws banning the use of certain handguns in order to allow the relevant Olympic events to take place at the London 2012 Games. [17785]

Hazel Blears: No changes to the law are required to allow the pistol shooting events to take place at the Olympic Games to be hosted by London in 2012. The necessary arrangements can be made by issuing authorities under Section 5 of the Firearms Act 1968.

General Almog

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether his Department is proposing to take further action to effect the arrest of General Almog; [17027]

(2) whether his Department made a request to Interpol to circulate the arrest warrant for General Almog. [17029]

Andy Burnham: The arrest warrant was issued on 10 September. On 15 September the District Judge who issued the warrant withdrew it, noting that it had been issued on grounds of urgency, but once General Almog had left the UK, the urgency was removed. There is therefore no outstanding warrant for his arrest.

Illegal Immigrants

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of *(a)* private and *(b)* commercial vehicles entering the UK were searched by immigration officials at the (i) Hull, (ii) Dover, (iii) Portsmouth and (iv) Southampton ports of entry in the last period for which figures are available. [3139]

Mr. McNulty: At Hull, Southampton, Portsmouth and juxtaposed locations with services arriving at Dover, manual searches of private cars are conducted by Immigration Service staff on a risk assessed, intelligence led basis. Figures are not collated on these checks.

Commercial vehicles on services to Portsmouth, Southampton and Hull are screened by the port operator and carriers abroad. Figures are not available for these checks. On arrival in the UK screening of the vehicles by the Immigration Service is undertaken on a risk assessed intelligence led basis. 100 per cent. of commercial vehicles departing from juxtaposed locations to Dover are screened by the port operators on behalf of carriers using search technologies provided by the Immigration Service. Secondary checks are also conducted by Immigration Officers at juxtaposed locations on a risk assessed, intelligence led basis.

Licensing Hours

Mr. Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what powers are available to the police to disperse youths in known troublespots; and if he will make a statement. [18557]

Hazel Blears: Section 30 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 gives the police a power to disperse groups who are causing or who are likely to cause intimidation, harassment, alarm or distress to others.

These powers are limited to areas where anti-social behaviour is a significant and persistent problem and there is a history of members of the public causing intimidation, harassment, alarm or distress to others.

If a superintendent is satisfied that these conditions have been met and he has gained the agreement of the local authority, he may give authorisation for this power to be used by an officer for a period of up to six months.

Parking Fines

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will collate and publish figures for *(a)* the income from parking fines and *(b)* the number of parking fines issued in each local authority area in England in each year since 1997. [17501]

Paul Goggins: Whilst information is not available centrally on the amount of income from parking fines, available information on court-imposed fines and fixed penalty notices issued by the police is given in the following tables. The information is broken down by police force area and relates to all offences of obstruction, waiting and parking in England during the calendar years 1997 to 2003 (latest available).

Not all fines and fixed penalties will have been paid.

Information for 2004 will be available early in 2006. Under the Road Traffic Act 1991, decriminalised parking enforcement (DPE) powers allow local authorities to take over responsibility for enforcing parking contraventions from police. Data on penalty charge notices (PCNs) from individual local authorities operating decriminalised parking enforcement was first published in the Home Office publication 'Offences relating to motor vehicles, England and Wales 2002 Supplementary tables'. The latest publication 2003 [Table 22*(a)*—22*(b)* refers] lists data by local authorities partaking in the scheme, a copy of which is available in the Library. This publication can also be accessed on the Home Office research development and statistics (RDS) website at:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/index.htm

Table A: Fixed penalty data by police force area for obstruction, waiting and parking offences[1,2] England 1997–2003

Number of tickets

	1997		*1998*		*1999*	
Police force area	*Endorsable*	*Non-endorsable*	*Endorsable*	*Non-endorsable*	*Endorsable*	*Non-endorsable*
Avon and Somerset	7	58,107	4	52,916	7	49,519
Bedfordshire	—	35,469	—	34,592	—	5,175
Cambridgeshire	2	32,499	1	28,779	—	30,387
Cheshire	3	32,257	4	30,182	3	25,922
Cleveland	—	21,700	2	22,864	1	18,633
Cumbria	2	20,800	2	23,162	2	12,952
Derbyshire	3	23,870	1	25,998	—	22,926
Devon and Cornwall	4	80,531	2	84,877	5	77,906
Dorset	—	40,725		32,790	—	32,708
Durham	1	15,040	2	15,912	—	12,140
Essex	10	59,748	9	58,919	5	49,230
Gloucestershire	1	33,417		31,067	1	28,467
Greater Manchester	7	166,242	9	141,889	5	78,844
Hampshire	5	70,475	7	66,249	8	50,937
Hertfordshire	2	52,954	3	31,219	2	36,064
Humberside	3	29,027	3	25,990	2	23,910
Kent	11	65,033	5	58,707	5	48,753
Lancashire	19	94,864	8	82,837	15	71,449
Leicestershire	5	53,338	2	49,078	3	45,722
Lincolnshire	—	29,067	9	26,641	2	15,486

Table A: Fixed penalty data by police force area for obstruction, waiting and parking offences[1,2]
England 1997–2003

Number of tickets

Police force area	1997		1998		1999	
	Endorsable	Non-endorsable	Endorsable	Non-endorsable	Endorsable	Non-endorsable
London, City of	—	666	—	1,109	3	725
Merseyside	6	98,229	4	97,518	12	86,912
Met Police	90	160,761	98	205,779	41	192,069
Norfolk	—	36,350	1	30,754	1	26,388
Northamptonshire	—	29,576	—	27,854	2	21,272
Northumbria	7	47,592	3	45,653	8	39,865
North Yorkshire	5	22,127	7	19,970	2	20,437
Nottinghamshire	2	42,021	2	37,004	—	34,871
South Yorkshire	4	28,256	7	30,847	11	26,694
Staffordshire	11	26,445	9	27,459	4	21,256
Suffolk	6	23,037	5	21,753	1	20,574
Surrey	6	25,614	7	25,400	6	20,544
Sussex	13	120,244	7	111,859	5	101,971
Thames Valley	6	77,971	6	76,943	3	66,454
Warwickshire	1	15,550	2	18,020	—	16,749
West Mercia	4	26,221	4	26,138	2	26,688
West Midlands	23	156,251	26	148,944	23	119,867
West Yorkshire	10	69,608	7	63,556	5	60,337
Wiltshire	5	16,025	2	15,452	1	12,896
England	284	2,037,707	270	1,956,680	196	1,653,699

Number of tickets

Police force area	2000		2001		2002	
	Endorsable	Non-endorsable	Endorsable	Non-endorsable	Endorsable	Non-endorsable
Avon and Somerset	1	34,551	4	25,827	1	22,481
Bedfordshire	2	3,485	—	2,991	—	3,602
Cambridgeshire	1	32,675	1	33,286	—	32,237
Cheshire	3	19,248	—	17,532	1	15,776
Cleveland	—	15,487	1	10,634	2	15,721
Cumbria	3	5,857	—	5,758	3	2,384
Derbyshire	—	22,259	—	18,792	2	16,409
Devon and Cornwall	3	77,874	3	59,407	4	59,631
Dorset	3	31,256	—	25,500	—	8,034
Durham	2	16,082	1	12,521	1	12,499
Essex	6	40,656	1	29,772	1	23,534
Gloucestershire	1	28,527	—	26,500	—	26,411
Greater Manchester	3	71,056	2	43,381	3	34,820
Hampshire	5	31,622	9	40,015	4	22,695
Hertfordshire	3	32,574	3	32,709	—	27,054
Humberside	4	26,594	3	25,701	2	26,504
Kent	12	3,673	10	1,702	4	1,086
Lancashire	6	64,929	6	55,992	4	47,729
Leicestershire	3	37,987	3	39,885	3	41,651
Lincolnshire	2	15,893	—	15,725	—	16,659
London, City of	—	438	2	511	—	741
Merseyside	3	61,246	4	49,967	3	35,989
Met Police	27	196,965	21	141,776	18	141,950
Norfolk	2	25,337	—	23,880	3	10,135
Northamptonshire	—	12,874	—	7,988	—	4,457
Northumbria	9	44,687	24	57,780	15	48,670
North Yorkshire	2	13,529	—	14,435	1	9,435
Nottinghamshire	2	31,525	—	24,515	—	13,387
South Yorkshire	8	28,940	6	30,360	6	29,356
Staffordshire	5	11,936	7	9,154	1	7,275
Suffolk	2	20,837	—	18,953	1	20,439
Surrey	4	21,431	1	22,961	4	25,040
Sussex	6	119	5	71,966	1	47,515
Thames Valley	4	51,917	5	37,409	6	34,605
Warwickshire	1	13,801	—	15,355	—	16,556
West Mercia	1	22,736	4	17,104	2	17,382
West Midlands	17	88,137	18	64,030	10	46,436
West Yorkshire	1	61,143	3	55,300	5	55,977
Wiltshire	1	10,210	1	7,450	—	8,395
England	158	1,449,739	148	1,194,524	111	1,030,657

Number of tickets

Police force area	2003 Endorsable	2003 Non-endorsable
Avon and Somerset	14	17,638
Bedfordshire	—	2,235
Cambridgeshire	1	22,459
Cheshire	1	15,938
Cleveland	—	8,522
Cumbria	2	1,814
Derbyshire	2	15,779
Devon and Cornwall	2	57,699
Dorset	—	635
Durham	—	5,668
Essex	4	9,953
Gloucestershire	1	27,703
Greater Manchester	—	27,964
Hampshire	8	18,384
Hertfordshire	1	9,216
Humberside	1	25,503
Kent	6	979
Lancashire	8	31,771
Leicestershire	1	31,023
Lincolnshire	—	18,563
London, City of	3	678
Merseyside	2	17,600
Met Police	26	209,195
Norfolk	—	9,532
Northamptonshire	—	3,701
Northumbria	21	30,418
North Yorkshire	—	5,670
Nottinghamshire	1	6,634
South Yorkshire	7	27,549
Staffordshire	1	8,410
Suffolk	14	20,183
Surrey	5	16,125
Sussex	2	46,181
Thames Valley	4	24,781
Warwickshire	—	14,041
West Mercia	3	12,451
West Midlands	15	53,118
West Yorkshire	2	54,176
Wiltshire	—	5,618
England	158	915,507

[1] Offences under the Road Traffic Act 1988 s.22; Transport Act 2000 ss.173 (5); 173 (6); 173 (7); 174 (3); 175 (2); 175 (3); 175 (4); 190 Highway Act 1835 ss 72 and 78; RTA 1988 ss. 19 & 21; Highways Act 1980 s. 137 (1); Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 ss. 5 (1), 8,32–36 and 45–53; Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) regulations 1986 Regs. 101 and 103; Transport Act 2000 Part III; Metropolitan Police Act 1839 s. 54 (1)

[2] Does not include decriminalised parking enforcements (DPE).

Table B: Court proceedings data for obstruction, waiting and parking offences[1,2] England 1997–2003

Court proceedings[3]

Police force area	1997 Total number of fines	1997 Total amount of fine (£)	1997 Average amount of fines (£)	1998 Total number of fines	1998 Total amount of fine (£)	1998 Average amount of fines (£)
Avon and Somerset	399	27,251	68	302	14,555	48
Bedfordshire	115	4,600	40	106	4,400	42
Cambridgeshire	167	6,820	41	162	6,980	43
Cheshire	272	10,928	40	270	9,989	37
Cleveland	366	12,355	34	328	9,733	30
Cumbria	128	5,050	39	117	4,475	38
Derbyshire	324	12,728	39	438	21,010	48
Devon and Cornwall	486	20,200	42	502	19,435	39
Dorset	88	3,423	39	86	3,515	41
Durham	22	780	35	71	3,035	43
Essex	416	19,705	47	378	16,904	45
Gloucestershire	145	6,350	44	120	3,890	32
Greater Manchester	1,130	61,004	54	908	36,667	40
Hampshire	119	5,026	42	158	6,984	44
Hertfordshire	208	8,180	39	208	10,149	49
Humberside	454	12,855	28	453	13,920	31
Kent	302	13,651	45	304	10,374	34
Lancashire	504	24,705	49	532	23,460	44
Leicestershire	202	8,895	44	190	9,120	48
Lincolnshire	71	2,470	35	82	3,375	41
London, City of	78	7,913	101	77	15,285	199
Merseyside	456	16,220	36	993	44,488	45
Met Police	2,208	429,315	194	2,785	307,948	111
Norfolk	113	3,535	31	76	2,740	36
Northamptonshire	463	23,310	50	440	23,175	53
Northumbria	295	10,754	36	248	10,878	44
North Yorkshire	80	3,687	46	69	2,655	38
Nottinghamshire	258	9,227	36	216	8,903	41
South Yorkshire	222	9,095	41	195	8,417	43
Staffordshire	141	6,470	46	173	9,196	53
Suffolk	435	13,735	32	355	11,855	33
Surrey	91	4,225	46	67	2,630	39
Sussex	251	9,249	37	392	13,606	35
Thames Valley	357	13,074	37	339	14,610	43
Warwickshire	161	7,810	49	68	3,440	51
West Mercia	449	21,945	49	548	22,901	42
West Midlands	834	34,183	41	962	42,376	44
West Yorkshire	350	15,189	43	531	22,090	42
Wiltshire	185	7,290	39	254	9,751	38
England	13,345	913,202	68	14,503	808,914	56

Court proceedings[3]

Police force area	1999 Total number of fines	1999 Total amount of fine (£)	1999 Average amount of fines (£)	2000 Total number of fines	2000 Total amount of fine (£)	2000 Average amount of fines (£)
Avon and Somerset	322	20,427	63	247	15,362	62
Bedfordshire	45	1,900	42	18	1,211	67
Cambridgeshire	112	4,685	42	92	3,165	34
Cheshire	172	6,851	40	129	5,844	45
Cleveland	283	9,625	34	277	10,050	36
Cumbria	109	5,538	51	63	3,805	60
Derbyshire	459	21,390	47	353	16,450	47
Devon and Cornwall	553	19,110	35	336	14,460	37
Dorset	78	3,720	48	84	3,650	43
Durham	120	5,680	47	165	7,050	43
Essex	491	20,911	43	334	19,925	60
Gloucestershire	430	18,332	43	738	27,323	37
Greater Manchester	637	25,371	40	392	17,133	44
Hampshire	140	5,384	38	100	3,900	39
Hertfordshire	309	18,906	61	395	25,265	64
Humberside	303	9,161	30	125	3,610	29
Kent	175	7,460	43	84	6,461	77
Lancashire	531	20,577	39	446	15,532	35
Leicestershire	241	10,817	45	181	7,120	39
Lincolnshire	68	2,516	37	49	1,530	31
London, City of	67	11,580	173	103	26,427	257
Merseyside	642	23,997	37	395	16,516	42
Met Police	3,045	367,928	121	3,002	435,821	145
Norfolk	63	2,840	45	61	2,295	38
Northamptonshire	567	30,157	53	463	26,560	57
Northumbria	283	10,820	38	225	7,990	36
North Yorkshire	78	3,585	46	69	3,155	46
Nottinghamshire	152	6,289	41	152	7,890	52
South Yorkshire	197	13,875	70	130	5,765	44
Staffordshire	113	5,587	49	37	1,940	52
Suffolk	343	12,785	37	313	10,825	35
Surrey	104	4,096	39	62	2,480	40
Sussex	429	15,137	35	493	16,945	34
Thames Valley	298	13,540	45	311	14,952	48
Warwickshire	153	5,090	33	142	6,910	49
West Mercia	652	34,195	52	463	22,450	48
West Midlands	936	44,102	47	612	28,644	47
West Yorkshire	686	30,310	44	509	26,186	44
Wiltshire	293	12,142	41	294	20,575	70
England	14,679	886,416	60	12,584	893,172	71

Court proceedings[3]

Police force area	2001 Total number of fines	2001 Total amount of fine (£)	2001 Average amount of fines (£)	2002 Total number of fines	2002 Total amount of fine (£)	2002 Average amount of fines (£)
Avon and Somerset	222	20,114	91	239	22,540	94
Bedfordshire	16	820	51	12	645	54
Cambridgeshire	113	4,495	40	109	5,925	54
Cheshire	232	9,385	40	164	7,720	47
Cleveland	465	16,300	35	360	13,300	37
Cumbria	38	2,190	58	56	3,610	64
Derbyshire	310	16,675	54	299	16,635	56
Devon and Cornwall	465	19,295	41	357	16,252	46
Dorset	465	19,295	41	65	3,370	52
Durham	136	6,200	46	77	7,145	93
Essex	224	12,238	55	286	18,727	65
Gloucestershire	770	32,191	42	814	30,450	37
Greater Manchester	470[4]	22,802	49	299	12,960	43
Hampshire	108	5,100	47	81	4,315	53
Hertfordshire	184	13,620	74	140	9,550	68
Humberside	83	3,350	40	160	6,225	39
Kent	24	1,970	82	21	1,500	71
Lancashire	442	20,835	47	606	25,465	42
Leicestershire	481	17,666	37	1,018	61,865	61
Lincolnshire	108	4,480	41	137	5,835	43
London, City of	19	3,420	180	26	3,755	144

Court proceedings[3]

	2001			2002		
Police force area	*Total number of fines*	*Total amount of fine (£)*	*Average amount of fines (£)*	*Total number of fines*	*Total amount of fine (£)*	*Average amount of fines (£)*
Merseyside	745	30,485	41	372	14,825	40
Met Police	2,400	363,471	151	2,374	353,392	149
Norfolk	115	4,707	41	126	8,916	71
Northamptonshire	152	9,775	64	18	985	55
Northumbria	274	11,635	42	256	10,525	41
North Yorkshire	92	4,350	47	56	2,620	47
Nottinghamshire	208	10,065	48	294	17,200	59
South Yorkshire	206	9,870	48	217	10,835	50
Staffordshire	23	1,245	54	21	1,685	80
Suffolk	274	10,590	39	378	15,405	41
Surrey	66	3,671	56	67	3,970	59
Sussex	447	15,883	36	129	5,615	44
Thames Valley	459	39,350	86	254	11,715	46
Warwickshire	156	8,265	53	166	9,330	56
West Mercia	494	24,071	49	373	20,390	55
West Midlands	338	16,841	50	315	13,785	44
West Yorkshire	548	21,827	40	563	21,247	38
Wiltshire	152	10,678	70	174	13,603	78
England	12,524	849,220	68	11,479	813,832	71

Court Proceedings[3]

	2003		
Police force area	*Total number of fines*	*Total amount of fine (£)*	*Average amount of fines (£)*
Avon and Somerset	110	9,445	86
Bedfordshire	75	4,020	54
Cambridgeshire	98	5,445	56
Cheshire	47	2,260	48
Cleveland	322	11,045	34
Cumbria	45	2,905	65
Derbyshire	349	18,575	53
Devon and Cornwall	300	14,068	47
Dorset	4	235	59
Durham	43	2,040	47
Essex	149	9,820	66
Gloucestershire	845	30,755	36
Greater Manchester	376	16,990	45
Hampshire	64	3,740	58
Hertfordshire	96	6,753	70
Humberside	214	8,410	39
Kent	14	780	56
Lancashire	576	23,138	40
Leicestershire	1,818	105,285	58
Lincolnshire	185	7,860	42
London, City of	19	1,635	86
Merseyside	168	8,539	51
Met Police	2,363	346,848	147
Norfolk	109	7,678	70
Northamptonshire	26	1,863	72
Northumbria	210	9,640	46
North Yorkshire	21	890	42
Nottinghamshire	21	890	42
South Yorkshire	194	10,365	53
Staffordshire	32	3,000	94
Suffolk	369	16,428	45
Surrey	95	5,960	63
Sussex	116	5,083	44
Thames Valley	325	17,830	55
Warwickshire	257	14,370	56
West Mercia	296	17,816	60
West Midlands	279	13,290	48
West Yorkshire	624	33,865	54
Wiltshire	185	22,174	120
England	11,436	821,733	72

[1] Offences under the Road Traffic Act 1988 s.22; Transport Act 2000 ss.173 (5); 173 (6); 173 (7); 174 (3); 175 (2); 175 (3); 175 (4); 100 Highway Act 1835 ss 72 and 78; RTA 1988 ss. 19 and 21: Highways Act 1980 s. 137 (1); Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 ss. 5 (1), 8, 32–36 and 45–53; Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) regulations 1986 Regs. 101 and 103; Transport Act 2000 Part III; Metropolitan Police Act 1839 s. 54 (1).

[2] Does not include decriminalised parking enforcements (DPE).

[3] Includes cases where fixed penalty notices were originally issued but not paid and subsequently referred to court.

Passport Control

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the procedures are for the identification of an entrant at passport control who is wearing a burka or other face-covering apparel. [19047]

Andy Burnham *[holding answer 18 October 2005]:* In accordance with the Immigration Act 1971 all persons arriving in the United Kingdom must produce a valid passport or other document satisfactorily establishing their nationality and identity and immigration officers are required to verify that they are the rightful holders of the document presented.

Where there are cultural or sensitive reasons such as facial disfigurement which would cause difficulties for the individual in showing their face at the immigration control, an immigration officer will make arrangements for that person to be taken to a separate room where, particularly in the case of Muslim women, a female officer will ask them to lift their veil. People are usually content to do this but there are powers to refuse entry to persons who cannot be satisfactorily identified.

Passports

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what basis the fees charged for transferring indefinite leave to remain stamps (No Time Limit) from former to current passports of citizens of other countries living in the United Kingdom for *(a)* the standard service and *(b)* the same-day Premium service were set. [16860]

Andy Burnham: The postal (standard) fee of £160 for transferring indefinite leave to remain from former to current passports was set to recover the full cost of delivering the service. The process to produce the permit, which replaced the old stamp, is complex consisting of several stages incorporating many security aspects. The premium fee of £500 was set for all application types made in person at Public Enquiry Offices and was also set on a full cost recovery basis.

Police Force Restructuring

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will consider proposals for joint co-operation between police forces rather than full mergers as part of the consultation exercise on police force restructuring. [19411]

Hazel Blears: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has asked chief officers and police authorities to submit proposals for restructuring by the end of the year. The Home Secretary has made clear that any proposals submitted, including any based on joint co-operation, must be ones that design in capacity and resilience to deliver, through an integrated framework, both protective services and neighbourhood policing to national standards and in the quickest possible time scales. He has also emphasised that he fully endorses HM inspectorate of constabulary's conclusion that the creation of strategic forces offers the best business solution.

Runaway Children

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make an assessment of the Children's Society claim that a national network of refuges is required to support runaway children. [18705]

Maria Eagle: I have been asked to reply.

The Government is looking at the best way to deliver services that support young runaways and whether or not refuges—either through a national network or as a local response—should be part of our approach.

To help us in this, we are running six projects that aim to test out how best we can provide safe, flexible and responsive community based services that can be easily incorporated into mainstream children's services. Two of these projects are testing a refuge based approach.

These projects are due to finish in March 2006 and we will consider the findings from these carefully, alongside other research evidence on runaways including from the Children's Society.

Sex Abuse Claims

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will make a statement on the validation process for individual claims for compensation from claimants alleging historical sex abuse; [16475]

(2) whether the validation process for claimants of compensation alleging historical sex abuse include *(a)* proof under oath, affirmation or equivalent, *(b)* the opportunity to challenge the account given by the claimant and *(c)* the opportunity for parties to tender witnesses and documents supporting or challenging the claimant's account. [16690]

Fiona Mactaggart: Claims for compensation from victims of sexual abuse are considered by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA) in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme. It is for the claimant to make out their case, and CICA determine applications on the balance of probabilities after having made appropriate inquiries of the police, medical and any other relevant authorities.

Applicants are required to sign an application form declaring, among other things, that the information given in the form is true.

Applications to CICA are confidential and details of the application, including whether any application has been made, are not disclosed to any third party without the consent of the applicant.

DEFENCE

Armed Forces

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the trained strength of each of the armed forces against requirement was on the latest date for which figures are available, broken down by rank. [16709]

Mr. Ingram: The trained strength against requirement of the UK Regular forces[1] by service and paid rank at 1 July 2005 is given in the following table:

	Naval Service		*Army*		*RAF*	
	Requirement	*Strength*	*Requirement*	*Strength*	*Requirement*	*Strength*
Officers	6,950	6,670	13,740	13,730	10,000	9,500
OF-6 to OF-9[2]	120	120	220	240	100	120
OF-5	270	260	600	590	280	290
OF-4	1,200	1,080	1,720	1,730	1,100	1,160
OF-3[3]	2,280	2,300	4,400	4,580	2,620	2,410
OF-2[3]	3,010	2,850	4,960	4,690	5,200	4,910
OF-1[4]	60	60	1,840	1,880	[6]—	[6]—
Specialists[5]	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	700	600
Other ranks	30,770	28,500	87,030	84,580	38,400	39,110
OR-9	920	840	1,470	1,790	1,150	1,210
OR-8[8]	920	850	4,460	4,870	[7]—	[7]—
OR-7	4,630	4,280	5,510	6,030	3,850	3,830
OR-6	5,560	4,750	10,880	10,220	7,840	7,510
OR-5[2]	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—	[7]—

	Naval Service		Army		RAF	
	Requirement	Strength	Requirement	Strength	Requirement	Strength
OR-4	6,860	5,490	16,860	16,030	10,420	10,020
OR-3[8,9]	[7] —	[7] —	17,760	16,150	[7] —	[7] —
OR-1[9] to OR2	11,880	12,300	30,080	29,500	15,140	16,550

[1] Data are for UK regular forces including nursing services and therefore exclude full time reserve service personnel, Gurkhas, the Home Service battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment and mobilised reservists.
[2] No services have personnel at NATO rank OF-10 or OR-5.
[3] Professional Aviator/Specialist Aircrew OF-3 in RAF are included in OF-2 strength because the posts they are filling are included in the OF-2 requirement.
[4] It is not possible to split requirement for RAF between OF-1 and OF-2
[5] Requirements for RAF Officer Specialist ranks are set by specialism rather than by rank.
[6] Not available
[7] Not applicable
[8] The Royal Air Force has no personnel at NATO ranks OR-3 or OR-8
[9] The Naval Service has no personnel at NATO ranks OR-1 or OR-3.
Note:
Numbers are rounded to the nearest 10. Due to the founding methods used, figures may not always equal the sum of the parts. Numbers ending in five have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias.
Source:
DASA (Tri-Service)

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 7W, on armed forces deployment, if he will name the three aircraft carriers earmarked for potential NATO operations. [18402]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* HMS Ark Royal, HMS Illustrious and HMS Invincible have been earmarked for deployment on NATO operations. Of these, HMS Invincible is available only at very low readiness and has been declared to NATO on this basis.

Avon Skin So Soft

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the effectiveness of 'Avon Skin So Soft' as an alternative to the mosquito repellent issued to armed forces personnel in the West of Scotland. [18581]

Mr. Touhig: The Defence Medical Services routinely test products to see if more effective alternatives can be found. To our knowledge, no research is currently being undertaken on the effectiveness of 'Avon Skin So Soft' as a mosquito repellent.

Bentley Priory

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many firm bids there have been for Bentley Priory, Middlesex. [19380]

Mr. Touhig: Although the Ministry of Defence is considering the disposal of RAF Bentley Priory, no final decision to proceed is expected before spring 2006. At this time, therefore, the Department has neither sought nor received firm bids for the purchase of RAF Bentley Priory, although we are in the process of selecting an industry partner who might in due course market the site on our behalf. On current estimates, a sale is not anticipated before 2007–08.

Correspondence

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will reply to the letters dated 26 July and 31 August from the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and transferred to him. [17812]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* My noble Friend, the Minister for Defence Procurement, wrote on 14 October 2005.

Cranwell

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many RAF fast jet pilots have passed through Cranwell in each of the last 10 years; [15398]

(2) how many RAF fast jet pilots he expects to enter Cranwell in 2006. [15399]

Mr. Touhig: The information is not held in the form requested. trainee pilots pass through initial officer training and complete elementary flying training before being allocated to a particular flying specialisation; fast jet, rotary wing or multi-engine.

The number of pilots selected after elementary flying training to enter basic fast jet training is detailed in the following table for the last seven financial years. Information for years preceding this is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Financial year	Number of pilots entering basic fast jet training
1998–99	82
1999–2000	82
2000–01	69
2001–02	78
2002–03	109
2003–04	67
2004–05	45

The numbers of fast jet pilots who successfully completed advanced training in each of the last 10 years are set out as follows:

Financial year	Number of trained pilots
1995–96	41
1996–97	43
1997–98	32
1998–99	37
1999–2000	46
2000–01	48
2001–02	55
2002–03	67
2003–04	50
2004–05	48

Five basic fast jet training courses are planned for each of the financial years 2005–06 and 2006–07 with eight trainee fast jet pilots on each course. It is planned to deliver 40 pilots who have successfully completed advanced fast jet training in each of the financial years 2005–06 and 2006–07.

Defence Exhibition

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what estimate he has made of the cost of servicing the Defence Systems and Equipment International Exhibition in September in respect of *(a)* armed forces equipment and personnel, *(b)* hosting foreign delegations and *(c)* policing; [18177]

(2) what public expenditure was incurred in support of the London Defence Systems and Equipment Exhibitions in 2005. [17479]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* The cost of hosting official overseas delegations at the Defence Systems and Equipment International 2005 exhibition was largely met from funds provided by the exhibition organisers, Spearhead Exhibitions Ltd. The balance of these costs, currently estimated to be approximately £110,000, was met from Defence funds. Personnel-related costs, mainly travel and subsistence, and minor costs for equipment movement not covered by commercial sponsorship, were met by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) from a number of budgets and have not been centrally identified. No estimate has been made of costs for which MOD is not responsible, such as the policing of the area surrounding the exhibition site.

Defence Reductions

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what plans he has for further reductions to the number of *(a)* warships, *(b)* aircraft and *(c)* ground vehicles beyond those outlined in the 2004 Defence White Paper; and what discussions he has had on such reductions; [17654]

(2) what plans he has for further reductions in the manpower of the UK armed forces beyond those outlined in the 2004 Defence White Paper; and what discussions he has had concerning such reductions. [17655]

John Reid: The 2004 'Future Capabilities' Command Paper set out an updated assessment of future force structure and service manpower requirements. Since its publication, the Department has also announced plans to form a Joint Special Forces Support Group (JSFSG) and the Formation of Special Reconnaissance Regiment (SRR). As part of the normalisation process in Northern Ireland, I announced on 1 August this year that the Home Service Battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment will disband at the end of Operation Banner in Northern Ireland. However this does not affect the force structure or manpower numbers announced in July 2004 as the Royal Irish (Home Service) manpower is excluded from figures on the size of the Regular, trained Army. I have no plans at present for further significant adjustments to capabilities or service manpower. As part of the day-to-day running of the Department, however, there will continue to be routine adjustments at the margins of the defence programme, including those related to delivery of the MOD's efficiency targets.

Eurofighter

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his latest estimate is of the sales of the Eurofighter in the first five years of operation. [16489]

Mr. Ingram: Under the terms of the four-nation Memorandum of Understanding, the four partner nations (Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom) have undertaken to procure a total of 620 Eurofighter-Typhoons in three tranches. The first two tranches of 384 aircraft are already under contract.

As a world-class aircraft, Typhoon has strong export prospects. An order for 18 aircraft has already been placed by Austria, and a number of other countries have also expressed an interest in acquiring the aircraft.

Gloucestershire Airport (Invoices)

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the average time taken by his Department to settle invoices submitted by Gloucestershire airport with respect to landing fees and fuel was in the last period for which figures are available; what steps are being taken to reduce this time; and if he will make a statement. [19089]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 18 October 2005]:* The Defence Bills Agency does not maintain records to illustrate the average length of time taken to pay particular suppliers' invoices. Establishing this degree of information for Gloucestershire Airport Ltd. would require detailed IT and manual investigation beyond the cost threshold for answering a parliamentary question.

The DBA does maintain aggregated records, by monthly and annual volume of valid and correctly presented invoices, which confirm that the Agency pays all such bills within 11 calendar days of receipt.

Military Personnel

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many serving military personnel in the *(a)* army, *(b)* Royal Navy and *(c)* Royal Air Force are (i) single, (ii) married, (iii) divorced and (iv) separated, broken down by the age ranges (A) 24 and under, (B) 25 to 29, (C) 30 to 34, (D) 35 to 39, (E) 40 to 44 and (F) 45 years and over. [18250]

Mr. Touhig: Strength of UK regular forces (trained and untrained) at 1 September 2005 by Service, marital status and age group is shown in the following tables:

Naval Service

	Married	*Not married*
All ages	16,700	22,795
24 and under	560	11,700
25 to 29	1,520	5,290
30 to 34	3,925	2,910
35 to 39	5,185	1,705
40 to 44	3,270	865
45 and over	2,240	325

The Naval Service groups those who are not married together, so it is not possible to produce separate analysis for those who are single, divorced or separated.

Army

	Single	*Married*	*Divorced*	*Separated*
All ages	55,020	48,575	3,515	230
24 and under	36,640	4,465	60	—
25 to 29	12,530	9,305	400	15
30 to 34	3,985	12,670	1,090	25
35 to 39	1,350	13,545	1,370	50
40 to 44	360	5,170	425	75
45 and over	155	3,420	170	65

Notes:

1. Single includes the categories "single" and "widower".
2. Married includes the categories "married (legally separated revoked)", "married" and "married (Decree Nisi revoked)".
3. Divorced includes the categories "divorce nisi absolute" and "single marriage annulled".
4. Separated includes the categories "legally separated" and "divorce Decree Nisi".

RAF

	Single	*Married*	*Divorced*	*Separated*
All ages	19,775	26,675	2,120	2,250
24 and under	10,175	1,150	20	115
25 to 29	5,600	2,885	120	355
30 to 34	2,325	5,095	425	520
35 to 39	1,070	7,655	755	625
40 to 44	400	5,440	485	410
45 and over	225	4,455	315	225

Notes:

1. Single includes the categories "single" and "widower".
2. Divorced includes the categories "divorce absolute" and "marriage annulled".
3. Separated includes the categories "legal separation", "divorce nisi" and estranged/mutually separated.

Ministerial Travel

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many air miles were accrued through departmental ministerial travel in his Department in 2004–05, broken down by Minister; how many were *(a)* foregone and *(b)* donated to charity, broken down by charity; and whether air miles accrued by officials were required to be (i) foregone and (ii) given to charity. [17328]

Mr. Touhig: Ministerial travel is conducted in accordance with the "Ministerial Code" and "Travel by Ministers". Guidance for Ministers on the use of air miles is set out in the "Ministerial Code". The guidance makes clear that air miles should be used only for official purposes or else forgone. However, if it is impracticable to use the benefits for Government travel, there is no objection to Ministers donating them to charity if this is permissible under the terms of the airline's scheme and the charity is one chosen by the airline.

Similar rules are in place for officials. However, the Ministry of Defence has no central record of air miles accrued by either Ministers or officials, and is unable to provide details of those forgone or donated to charity.

QinetiQ

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what procedures have been put in place to ensure that funding received by QinetiQ from the Department on a non-competitive or allocated basis is used for the purposes for which it is intended. [16833]

Mr. Ingram: The funding QinetiQ receives is tied to specific tasks that need to be completed to the satisfaction of the MOD customer. The MOD has a formal enabling contract with QinetiQ and the specific tasks are awarded against that contract. The procedures follow the principles of contracting applied to any supplier. Progress and completion of individual tasks are monitored by MOD staff against agreed criteria.

Regiment Naming

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the full procedure and timetable is for *(a)* selecting and *(b)* formally agreeing a new name for a regiment, with particular reference to the King's Lancashire and Border Regiment. [17695]

Mr. Ingram: In selecting the names for new infantry regiments there has been a great deal of consultation at local and regimental level about potential new titles. The responsible Division of the Infantry then makes a recommendation to the Executive Committee of the Army Board, which in turn seeks the approval of Ministers and, ultimately, Her Majesty the Queen.

UK Nuclear Deterrent

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make it his policy to seek a vote in the House on the future of the UK nuclear deterrent. [19087]

John Reid: I have nothing to add to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk (Mr. Moore) on 14 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 620W.

Volunteering

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many volunteering positions his Department has offered in each of the last five years. [17869]

Mr. Touhig: For civilian employees, the information requested is shown in the following table:

	Prince's Trust	*Prince's Trust Druidstone*	*Raleigh International*
2004–05	83	95	20
2003–04	83	93	20
2002–03	86	49	20
2001–02	66	56	20
2000–01	121	5	20
Total	439	298	100

These figures only represent centrally managed volunteering initiatives. Local contributions by Ministry of Defence business units to the Year of the Volunteer are not recorded centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Information relating to the Armed Forces is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Birmingham Stock Exchange

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much was spent by the West Midlands Regional Development Association on the creation of a stock exchange in Birmingham; and what the planned completion date is. [18780]

Alun Michael: There is a well acknowledged market failure for west midlands based SMEs raising growth capital. Recent work undertaken by ECOTEC for AWM in September 2004 has restated the existence of an equity gap of between £0.5 million and £5 million, with the most severe constraints being for businesses seeking up to £2 million of growth capital.

Investbx will act as a facilitator to connect ambitious west midlands based companies with investors. Companies will release shares in exchange for funds; Investors will have access to investment opportunities that would otherwise not have been available to them.

While the primary objective of Investbx is to raise funds for the company, a number of ancillary services such as a trading platform, receiving agent services and showcasing will be an integral part of the Investbx offer to ensure that the process of raising money is as straightforward as possible and that there is continued interest in the company once it joins the trading platform.

The application for up to £3.8 million funding over six years for Investbx was formally approved by AWM on 19 January 2005. The project received DTI Section 5(2)*(c)* consent on 4 April 2005 and it is anticipated that Investbx will launch during Q2 2006. Funding from AWM will be used to pump prime the establishment of Investbx for up to five years or such time as sufficient companies and investors have been attracted in order to sustain Investbx as a stand alone entity.

AWM's involvement will give comfort that Investbx will be supported for at least five years or until it reaches the point of sustainability. This guaranteed longevity is vital. Potential companies, investors and intermediaries need re-assurance that Investbx will be a permanent feature of the financial community.

Investbx Scheme

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what expenditure Advantage West Midlands *(a)* has so far incurred and *(b)* is expected to incur on establishing the Investbx scheme. [19715]

Alun Michael: The project background was explained in parliamentary question number 18780 which appears above this question.

The application for up to £3.8 million funding over six years for Investbx as formally approved by AWM on 19 January 2005 and the project received DTI section 5(2)(c) consent on 4 April 2005. Costs associated with establishing Investbx which include feasibility, work, market testing and legal fees are expected to be as follows:

	Total to establish Investbx (£000)
To 30 September 2005	826
To 31 March 2006	c.900

It is anticipated that Investbx will launch during Q2 2006.

Civil Partnerships Act

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how he plans to inform *(a)* employees and *(b)* businesses of the change in rules that will occur as a result of the introduction of the Civil Partnerships Act 2004. [18405]

Meg Munn: Informing employees and businesses about the Civil Partnership Act is an important element of the Government's awareness raising campaign about the legislation.

The Women and Equality Unit (WEU) has already produced advice for employees and businesses about the impact of the introduction of the Civil Partnership Act. In July a bulletin specifically for employees and businesses was published on the WEU website and emailed to a wide range of stakeholders, including employers organisations and trade unions.

ACAS will shortly be re-issuing its guide on "Sexual Orientation in the Workplace", which has been updated to reflect the introduction of civil partnership. In addition, I have written several articles about civil partnership for business and trade union publications which will be published over the next couple of months.

There is also extensive general guidance on civil partnership on the WEU website, which can be access at www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/civilpartnership.htm

Coal Imports

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the impact of coal imports on the UK's balance of payments; and if he will make a statement. [16530]

Malcolm Wicks: According to the latest HM Revenue and Customs statistics, in 2004 the value of imports of coal and other solid fuels was £1482.3 million. The value of exports of coal and other solid fuels was £60.2 million. Hence, in 2004 the net exports (exports minus imports) of coal and solid fuel were valued at -£1422.1 million.

These net exports represent 6 per cent. of the UK current account deficit in 2004. The current account deficit is forecast to widen a little this year to around 2¾ per cent. of GDP, and to be stable at about that level thereafter. This remains modest compared to historical peaks: The current account deficit was more than 5 per cent. of GDP in 1989.

Energy Efficiency (Commercial Sector)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the percentage of energy usage in the commercial and services sector that could be saved through energy efficiency measures. [17410]

Mr. Morley: I have been asked to reply.

Estimates from experts vary, depending on assumptions made. In broad terms, it might be possible to achieve savings of around 30 per cent. if all technical measures were implemented, regardless of cost, in the Commercial and Public Services sector. However, the potential for cost-effective measures by 2010 is around 10 per cent.

Energy Prices

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations he has received from manufacturing industry about the competitive impact of UK energy prices; and if he will make a statement. [19338]

Malcolm Wicks: DTI Ministers have received numerous letters from individual companies and representative bodies on this issue, and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and I have had frequent meetings with these groups over the past 12 months. In addition, in January 2005, the Department set up the Gas Prices Working Group with the Energy Intensive Users Group and Ofgem to address this issue. The group has now agreed a list of action points for the short to medium term, such as maximising gas supplies, improving the design of the gas market, encouraging demand side response and pursuing energy market liberalisation in the EU.

Gas and Electricity

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what demand modelling he has performed to examine the interplay between gas and electricity generation in the event of a one in 20 cold winter. [18268]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has not undertaken demand modelling to examine the interplay between gas and electricity. This is undertaken by National Grid, as system operator.

National Grid's consideration of the interaction between gas and electricity can be found in Section C of its Winter Outlook Report, published on 5 October:

http://www.ofgem.gov.uk/temp/ofgem/cache/cmsattach/12493_214_05.pdf

Hazardous Substances

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether she supports the proposal for the EU to exempt the brominated flame retardant deca-BDE from the ban on hazardous substances in electronics due to enter into force in 2006. [17235]

Alun Michael: The European Commission adopted its Decision to exempt deca-BDE in polymeric applications from the restriction on the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment (RoHS) Directive on 13 October 2005. This was published in the EC's Official Journal on 15 October 2005, (OJ no. L271, 15.10.2005, p. 48).

Independent School Fees

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he expects the Office of Fair Trading will publish the results of their inquiry into possible collusion in setting fee levels at certain independent schools. [18596]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The conduct and timing of investigations carried out by the Office of Fair Trading are a matter for that body, which conducts its investigations independently of the Secretary of State and other Government Departments.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the cost of the Office of Fair Trading inquiry into possible fee-setting at certain independent schools. [18597]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The investigation was launched in June 2003.

The OFT does not have figures that differentiate the costs of cases pre-dating the launch of its dedicated time recording systems on 1 April 2004. The figures available show that the direct costs of the schools investigation since this point are approximately:

	£
2004–05	173,000
Q1 2005–06	29,000
Total from 1 April 2004–30 June 2005	202,000

The figures for Q2 2005–06 should be available at the end of the month.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether he will place in the Library the evidence submitted to the Office of Fair Trading inquiry into possible collusion in fee-setting at certain independent schools. [18598]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Evidence gathered by the Office of Fair Trading during the course of its investigations is retained by the Office of Fair Trading, which is independent of the Secretary of State and of other Government Departments. Such evidence is also subject to statutory restrictions on disclosure under part 9 of the Enterprise Act 2002 which would prevent it from being placed in the Libraries of the House.

Liquefied Gas Pipeline

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what discussions he has had with Transco about the proposed routes of the liquefied gas pipelines from Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire; [19352]

(2) if he will make a statement on the proposed routes of the Milford Haven liquefied gas pipeline. [19353]

Malcolm Wicks: I have facilitated discussions between the LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) terminal companies, National Grid (formerly "National Grid Transco"), and Ofgem, about the need for timely pipeline connections to flow natural gas from the terminals (when commissioned) into the National Transportation System for gas. The choice of route is a commercial matter for National Grid, subject to the necessary regulatory consents.

Meters

Mark Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many Dynamically Teleswitched Meters there are in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* Wales. [17759]

Malcolm Wicks: There are 228,000 Dynamically Switched Meters in Scotland. No data are available for England and Wales

Miners' Compensation

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many disabled miners or their widows have received compensation for lung disease and vibration white finger in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* Tyne and Wear and *(d)* the UK in each year since 1997. [17947]

Malcolm Wicks: The figures requested are set out in the following tables. Such statistics are available by constituency or postcode boundaries, so figures for South Tyneside and Tyne and Wear cannot be produced individually. Payments include those to miners' estates as well as miners and widows.

COPD

	Jarrow	*South Tyneside*[1]	*UK*
1997	0	0	0
1998	2	12	1,147
1999	1	10	643
2000	21	96	4,427
2001	30	182	10,820
2002	83	526	31,995
2003	130	836	48,504
2004	187	1,231	59,004
2005	321	1,969	93,733
Total	775	4,862	250,273

VWF

	Jarrow	*South Tyneside*[1]	*UK*
1997	1	4	748
1998	0	19	1,182
1999	39	252	5,343
2000	39	233	7,488
2001	51	427	17,543
2002	76	479	22,446
2003	120	664	30,796
2004	92	538	25,028
2005	54	335	15,924
Total	472	2,951	126,498

[1] Consists of South Shields, Gateshead East and Washington West, Sunderland North, Sunderland South and Jarrow constituencies.

Note:

To ensure that a claimant is only reported once, where a claimant has received a payment in separate years they are only reported on the latest payment (e.g. if a claimant receives an interim payment in 2001 and a full and final payment in 2002, they will be reported in 2002 only).

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much compensation has been paid for lung disease and vibration white finger to disabled miners or their widows in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* Tyne and Wear and *(d)* the UK in each year since 1997. [17948]

Malcolm Wicks: The figures requested are set out in the following tables. Such statistics are available by constituency or postcode boundaries, so figures for South Tyneside and Tyne and Wear cannot be produced individually. Payments include those to miners' estates as well as miners and widows.

COPD

	Jarrow	*South Tyneside*[1]	*UK*
1997	—	—	—
1998	44,000	298,000	21,183,214
1999	58,622	426,312	21,802,087
2000	222,128	1,291,183	60,840,464
2001	293,762	2,297,737	134,749,625
2002	544,634	5,260,846	295,410,803
2003	1,064,164	7,944,173	413,921,531
2004	1,116,472	8,375,901	340,768,003
2005	1,400,960	8,606,947	325,688,955
Total	4,744,743	34,501,099	1,614,364,682

VWF

	Jarrow	*South Tyneside*[1]	*UK*
1997	1,450	8,230	879,351
1998	17,000	136,884	3,680,980
1999	479,847	3,352,533	51,431,960
2000	1,016,571	6,742,373	149,170,029
2001	899,037	6,895,903	231,872,092
2002	845,049	5,519,821	226,824,141
2003	998,678	5,950,994	245,242,056
2004	774,671	4,801,760	174,635,529
2005	459,790	3,060,557	97,678,630
Total	5,492,092	36,469,055	1,181,414,766

[1] Consists of South Shields, Gateshead East and Washington West, Sunderland North, Sunderland South and Jarrow constituencies.

Note:

Total damages paid represents all payments made, i.e. includes both interims and full & final payments.

National Grid

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the impact of a reduction in the voltage on the national grid in the event of a one in 50 cold winter on *(a)* domestic and *(b)* commercial consumers. [18265]

Malcolm Wicks: If voltage demand measures were needed to handle a short-term electricity shortage the most likely visible impact on consumers would be a slight dimming of lights and kettles would take longer to boil. Some sensitive, mainly commercial and industrial, electronic systems may be affected e.g. fire alarms.

Demand restraint measures of this nature would mostly happen during the morning and evening peak demand periods.

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry to what level the voltage on the national grid may be reduced in the event of a one in 50 cold winter. [18266]

Malcolm Wicks: Under the terms of the Grid Code, National Grid can direct Distributed Network Operators to implement short-term demand reduction measures. The Distributed Network Operators have a number of different tools available to deal with a request of this nature; these include short-term disconnection,

interrupting supply to those customers whose contracts permit it or the use of voltage reductions. The severity of the situation would decide which of these measures were appropriate.

However, this is a very short-term measure that can only address an emergency situation. In a long-term shortage of supply incident other demand restraint measures would be utilised.

Natural Gas

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what contingency plans are in place to deal with a possible shortage of natural gas during the winter of 2005–06; and what significant methods are available, in addition to limiting electricity generation, to reduce natural gas consumption. [17648]

Malcolm Wicks: In the first instance the Government would expect demand for gas to reduce itself in response to price signals indicating tightness in the balance between supply and demand in the gas market. This has already been observed in previous winters, mostly from electricity generation but also, to a lesser extent, from large industrial users of gas. The scope for additional demand reduction from this sector was explored in a report, "Estimation of Industrial Buyers' Potential Demand Response to Short Periods of High Gas & Electricity Prices: A report to the DTI and Ofgem by Global Insight", which is available from the DTI website under

http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/publications/policy/index.shtml

The Government and Ofgem have been working with large industrial users to encourage the provision of more timely and easily accessible information to help market participants to identify commercial opportunities for such demand-side response.

In the extremely unlikely event of the situation deteriorating to the point where the market is no longer able to balance itself, powers to restrict gas supply are available to the national emergency co-ordinator at National Grid and to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State under applicable legislation.

Nuclear Power

Helen Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether a privatised British Nuclear Group would continue to take overseas contracts for the reprocessing of nuclear material in the UK; and if he will make a statement. [18310]

Malcolm Wicks: The BNFL Board met on 29 September further to consider a number of strategic options for British Nuclear Group to give it the best chance of success in the future and place it in the strongest possible position to win the upcoming NDA site competitions. The preference of the Board is to pursue a sale, which they believe would be in the best interests of the company and its employees.

Irrespective of who owns BNG decisions on future reprocessing contracts would be for the Government to take on the advice of the NDA.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what percentage of drums of high-level nuclear waste held at Sellafield have been classified by BNFL as not safe to be returned to foreign customers. [17222]

Malcolm Wicks: At Sellafield, high-level nuclear waste is made safe for long-term storage by a process called vitrification. The vitrification process chemically bonds the liquid high level waste into a solid glass matrix which is held in a stainless steel container. These vitrified residue containers are then placed in an engineered store.

Approximately 20 per cent. of the vitrified residue containers scheduled to be produced over the lifetime of the vitrification plant at Sellafield will be returned to overseas reprocessing customers. The vitrified residue containers are manufactured to meet an agreed customer specification and in addition are certified by an independent third party auditor on behalf of overseas customers. To date over 1,000 containers have been certified as meeting this specification.

All vitrified residue containers produced are safely stored at Sellafield and will remain safe for long term storage. Of those containers produced for export to overseas customers none have been classified by British Nuclear Group as unsafe.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the production of nuggets of soluble radioactivity in the vitrification process. [17223]

Malcolm Wicks: High level nuclear waste is made safe for long term storage by a process called vitrification. Vitrification chemically bonds the waste products into a solid glass matrix. The vitrification process is internationally recognised as the best available technology for the treatment and storage of such waste.

During the production of the vitrified residue containers, trace amounts of mainly non-radioactive chemicals may not be completely bound into the glass matrix. This is termed 'yellow phase' material and is soluble in water. While formation of such traces of soluble material cannot be entirely eliminated, its formation is rendered insignificant by the glass formulation chosen to incorporate the waste and the operating parameters to which the vitrification process is controlled.

The vitrification plants at Sellafield are operated to reduce the potential for 'yellow phase' formation. The vitrified residue containers remain safe for long term storage.

Offshore Wind

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the potential of Tees Valley offshore wind to help the Government achieve their target for renewable energy production by 2010. [18699]

Malcolm Wicks: The application for consent for the Teesside offshore wind farm at Redcar is still being considered prior to its determination by Ministers. In taking the decision on the application, Ministers will be mindful of the Government targets for the take up of renewable energy and will balance these against any local impacts that have been identified during the public consultation exercise carried out for this project.

Post Offices (Fraud)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many post offices were temporarily closed because of suspected fraud within their premises in the last year for which figures are available. [19546]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. (POL). The chief executive, David Mills, has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Regional Government

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* Government expenditure and *(b)* administration costs of regional development agencies was in each year since their creation; and what the estimated figures are for 2005–06. [15213]

Alun Michael: The tables show the regional development agencies' expenditure and their administration costs for the financial years 1999–2000 to 2004–5 and plans for 2005–2006.

	1999–2000		*2000–01*		*2001–02*	
	Expenditure	*Administration*	*Expenditure*	*Administration*	*Expenditure*	*Administration*
Advantage West Midlands	103,423	7,421	112,674	8,352	140,678	8,793
East of England Development Agency	29,818	4,570	36,140	4,849	54,520	5,836
East Midlands Development Agency	41,117	6,941	67,197	7,377	86,070	7,488
London Development Agency	—	—	235,490	6,009	265,815	9,470
North West Development Agency	141,367	11,837	155,750	13,876	269,688	14,044
One North East	92,280	9,585	97,736	10,513	158,181	10,103
South East England Development Agency	63,473	5,196	73,235	6,343	97,322	6,643
South West Development Agency	43,028	7,255	61,736	8,380	84,780	9,099
Yorkshire Forward	121,298	7,795	124,950	8,284	207,491	9,989

	2002–03		*2003–04*	
	Expenditure	*Administration*	*Expenditure*	*Administration*
Advantage West Midlands	204,133	13,862	239,854	17,300
East of England Development Agency	88,496	9,000	80,156	9,000
East Midlands Development Agency	100,706	10,200	116,795	12,000
London Development Agency	294,827	17,000	317,279	17,000
North West Development Agency	274,032	21,619	309,092	29,925
One North East	192,860	18,372	223,000	21,258
South East England Development Agency	111,911	14,303	135,706	16,395
South West Development Agency	102,856	14,242	99,052	16,044
Yorkshire Forward	211,453	16,608	244,249	17,482

	2004–05		*2005–06*	
	Expenditure	*Administration*	*Expenditure*	*Administration*
Advantage West Midlands	217,281	18,500	272,312	20,000
East of England Development Agency	84,140	10,000	129,438	11,200
East Midlands Development Agency	118,774	13,668	155,963	15,000
London Development Agency	327,642	30,400	372,979	29,500
North West Development Agency	366,720	32,449	381,831	38,792
One North East	226,528	21,773	239,674	22,500
South East England Development Agency	110,225	16,868	157,159	18,000
South West Development Agency	113,368	15,944	153,092	19,773
Yorkshire Forward	287,966	17,351	295,007	19,510

Note:
The expenditure figures are net of receipts that RDAs recycle

Regional Industrial Development Boards

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* expenditure and *(b)* administrative costs of each regional industrial development board were in each year since their creation; and what the estimated costs are for 2005–06. [17381]

Alun Michael: The regional industrial development boards (RIDBs) are advisory and do not incur any expenditure. Appointments to RIDBs are unpaid but members have an entitlement to claim expenses. Some modest administration costs are incurred within the RDAs arranging and holding periodic meetings. Further administration costs are also borne by the

Government offices (GOs) in the course of processing appointments. The most recent estimate of annual costs is as follows:

	£
GO-YH[1]	38,661
GO-NE	12,917
GO-NW	18,500
GO-SW	34,065
GO-WM	11,249
GO-SE[2]	24,000
GO-EE	8,140

[1] Covering Yorkshire and Humberside and East Midlands RIDBs
[2] Covering London and South East RIDBs

Historical data can be produced only at disproportionate cost.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the role and responsibilities of *(a)* regional industrial development boards and *(b)* regional development agencies are. [17382]

Alun Michael: This information can be found in the Industrial Development Act 1982 Annual Report and the Regional Development Agencies Act 1998, which are available in the Libraries of the House.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Teenage Pregnancy

Lynda Waltho: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what recent discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Health on teenage pregnancy. [15027]

Meg Munn: Using the Women's Minister's Network meetings I have had discussions with Ministers from the Department of Health about a number of issues concerning women and health and look forward to continuing this dialogue when we meet again.

CABINET OFFICE

Ministerial Travel

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many air miles were accrued through departmental ministerial travel in 2004–05, broken down by Minister; how many were *(a)* foregone and *(b)* donated to charity, broken down by charity; and whether air miles accrued by officials were required to be (i) foregone and (ii) given to charity. [17319]

Mr. Hutton: Ministerial travel is conducted in accordance with the 'Ministerial Code' and Travel by Ministers'. Guidance for Ministers on the use of air miles is set out in the 'Ministerial Code'. The guidance makes clear that air miles should be used only for official purposes or else foregone. However, if it is impracticable to use the benefits for Government travel, there is no objection to Ministers donating them to charity if this is permissible under the terms of the airline's scheme and the charity is one chosen by the airline. Similar rules are in place for officials.

No air miles were accrued through Cabinet Office ministerial travel in 2004–05.

Ombudsman Service

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what monitoring arrangements his Department has in place in respect of the administrative performance of the Ombudsman Service; and what the *(a)* average and *(b)* target time is for (i) launching and (ii) concluding an investigation from the date of receipt of an application. [19065]

Mr. Hutton: The Parliamentary Ombudsman, Ann Abraham, is an independent office-holder. She operates under the provisions of the Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1967 (as amended).

The Parliamentary Ombudsman published a Three Year Strategic Plan in July in which she set out the customer service standards and delivery targets that she and her staff aim to meet or exceed over the next three years. She publishes information about performance against targets in her annual report to Parliament. Her 2004–05 Annual Report, HC 348, was published on 20 July. Copies of the Three Year Strategic Plan and annual reports are available in the Library.

Information in respect of other Ombudsmen is not a matter for the Cabinet Office.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Departmental Vehicles

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many vehicles for which the Department is responsible are fitted with retreaded tyres. [17987]

Mr. Thomas: For information on the use of retread tyres in vehicles provided to the Department by the Government Car and Despatch Agency I refer the hon. Member to the letter of 11 October 2005 which he received from the Chief Executive of the GCDA, reference UIN15087 and UIN15088. Copies of this letter are available in the Library.

DFID is not responsible for any other vehicles in the UK. Information on vehicles in overseas offices is not centrally available and cannot be obtained without incurring a disproportionate cost.

Ministerial Travel

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many air miles were accrued through departmental ministerial travel in 2004–05, broken down by Minister; how many were *(a)* foregone and *(b)* donated to charity, broken down by charity; and whether air miles accrued by officials were required to be (i) foregone and (ii) given to charity. [17334]

Hilary Benn: Ministerial travel is conducted in accordance with the "Ministerial Code" and "Travel by Ministers". Guidance for Ministers on the use of Air Miles is set out in the Ministerial Code, which makes it clear that air miles should be used only for official

purposes or else forgone. If it is impracticable to use the benefits for Government travel, there is no objection to their donation to a charity chosen by the airline. Similar rules apply for officials. We do not maintain a record of air miles earned.

DFID has recently established a pilot scheme with major airlines under which air miles accrued on official travel can be exchanged for "earth miles" to fund carbon offset projects to neutralise emissions from air travel. All members of DFID are encouraged to contribute.

Volunteering

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many volunteering positions his Department has offered in each of the last five years. [17876]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has offered no volunteering positions in the last five years under the Next Steps initiative. However, we have long recognised the value of volunteering and the vital contribution that volunteers make in our wider development work. We therefore support a number of civil society organisations who act as volunteer sending agencies as part of the global effort to reduce world poverty.

We also support volunteering activities in other ways. Firstly, through our Volunteering Strategy, we encourage DFID staff at all levels to volunteer to work in their local community by offering one day's paid leave a year. Secondly, we publicise the work of the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) on our website for those members of the public who may have specialist skills that could be of assistance in disaster situations.

World Trade

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what *(a)* aid and *(b)* other assistance has been provided to developing countries to support their participation in the forthcoming world trade negotiations. [19485]

Mr. Thomas: There are three main ways in which we have supported and continue to support developing countries in trade negotiations, including the current Round of World Trade Organisation (WTO) trade talks. First, through assistance to help countries formulate and develop their own trade policies, taking account of their domestic and regional circumstances. Second, by helping countries build their capacity to negotiate these policies with their partners, either regionally or international and thirdly, we help the actual participation of developing countries in trade talks themselves. For example, we have provided countries such as Lesotho and Zambia with the resources they need to secure analysis and expertise in order to help determine their own trade policies.

We have supported regional institutions that in turn support their developing country members in trade analysis and negotiations. For example, through funding trade advisors in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA) Secretariats and providing resources for the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery, the body that helps Caribbean countries co-ordinate and pursue their negotiating efforts, not just in the WTO but in terms of other agreements such as the Cotonou Economic Partnership Agreements.

We have funded advisory support and resources to the Least Developed Country (LDC) group chaired by Zambia, to develop their position and attendance at the Hong Kong WTO ministerial and with other donors we contribute to a trust fund that will enable Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to attend the forthcoming WTO ministerial meeting in Hong Kong in December.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Academy Courses (London West)

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of the overall capital funding in the London West Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area is expected to be spent on the proposed 16 to 19 academy based on Brunel university's Uxbridge campus; and whether the proportions involved are consistent with the criteria applied to other LSC funded institutions. [19522]

Bill Rammell: The Brunel HSBC Education Trust Academy project is currently in the feasibility stage of development (currently planned to open in September 2008), where its viability is assessed and consulted on with local stakeholders. If the project is deemed to be feasible it will be submitted to the LSC and the Secretary of State for approval. The LSC have agreed to provide up to 35 per cent. of the capital costs of the project but a precise figure for this will not be known until the main design stage of the feasibility phase is completed, which is expected to be around March 2006. This proportion is consistent with the criteria applied to other LSC funded institutions.

A-level Grades

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what assessment she has made of the relative accuracy of A-level grade predictions made for the purpose of university admissions in the case of *(a)* pupils in the independent and state school sectors and *(b)* pupils from different socio-economic groups; [17316]

(2) what research she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the accuracy of A-level grade predictions, with particular reference to the relative accuracy of grade predictions in the state and independent sectors. [17317]

Bill Rammell: The Department commissioned an analysis of data from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service on predicted A-level grades to inform the consultation on Improving the Higher Education Applications Process which was published on 9 September. The analysis has also been published and is available on the UCAS website.

The research found that: over half of all predicted grades were inaccurate; applicants from the lower socio-economic groups were more likely to receive an incorrect predicted grade than applicants from higher

groups; 10.2 per cent. of applicants from the lowest[1] socio-economic group received under-predicted grades compared to 7.5 per cent. of the highest group (in terms of over-prediction, these proportions are 50.5 per cent. and 41.1 per cent. respectively); and applicants from independent and grammar schools are more likely to receive accurate grades than those at maintained schools.

Internal analysis of the same data was conducted by the Department and this informed the consultation document (a copy of this analysis has been placed in the House of Commons Library). It shows that a number of factors have a bearing on the accuracy of predictions, and bears out the assessment that there is an appreciable chance that predicted grades do not accurately foreshadow actual grades. This is a concern for students whatever their background and whether they received over- or under-predictions.

It is clear from the research that some are disadvantaged more than others. One such group are students from lower socio-economic groups for whom, because of their generally lower levels of attainment, predicted grades are more likely to be inaccurate—and so the present system is least fair to the poorest students.

[1] UCAS's analysis splits applicants into six socio-economic status groups, from parental occupation being higher managerial posts, to semi-routine occupations.

Basic Skills Training

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the eligibility criteria are for receiving free basic skills training at further education colleges. [19204]

Bill Rammell: For individuals eligible for Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funding basic skills provision is free to the learner. I refer the hon. Member to the LSC's publication 'Funding Guidance for Further Education in 2004/05' and the supplementary publication 'Funding Guidance for Further Education in 2005/06' which sets out fully the eligibility criteria. Copies have been placed in the House Libraries.

Communication Aids Project

Mr. Lamley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to extend funding for the Communication Aids Project beyond March 2006; and what steps she will take to safeguard the improvements secured by the Communication Aids Project if funding is to cease. [18348]

Maria Eagle: We will be reviewing the case for further funding for the Communication Aids Project (CAP) in the months to come, as part of a wider review of Government expenditure plans. The review of CAP funding will consider all relevant factors including lessons learnt to date and how best to maintain momentum.

Correspondence

Mr. Shepherd: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when the Minister of State for Schools will give a substantive reply to the letter of 22 June from the hon. Member for Aldridge-Brownhills in respect of Dr. David Cooper. [19071]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 18 October 2005]:* I replied to the hon. Member's letter of 22 June on 19 October.

Faith Schools

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will take steps to stop the expansion in the number of faith schools. [17635]

Jacqui Smith: The Government believes parents should have a range of schools to choose from, including faith schools. We welcome more faith schools in the maintained sector providing they have the support of parents and the local community. Decisions about the establishment of new faith schools are made at local level by the School Organisation Committee which takes into account the views of local people. Where the Committee is unable to reach a unanimous decision an independent schools adjudicator determines the proposals.

Foreign Languages

Mr. Waring: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many A-level students sat examinations in *(a)* French, *(b)* German, *(c)* Spanish, *(d)* Russian, *(e)* Mandarin and *(f)* Arabic in each year since 2001. [17523]

Jacqui Smith: The number of GCE A-level examination entries in England in the foreign languages requested can be found as follows.

Foreign language entries of 16 to 18-year-olds, 2001–04

	2001	2002	2003	2004
French	15,393	13,599	12,904	12,480
German	7,607	6,367	6,068	5,643
Spanish	4,501	4,430	4,504	4,650
Arabic	167	188	181	218
Mandarin	1,102	1,400	1,496	1,677
Russian	442	415	485	451

Geography

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what proportion of pupils took *(a)* GCSE and *(b)* A level geography in each year since 1995. [17949]

Jacqui Smith: The number and proportion of pupils who took GCSE and A-level geography in each year since 1995 was:

	GCSE		A-level	
Academic year	Number[1]	Percentage	Number[1]	Percentage
2004	200,100	32	29,900	12
2003	200,100	32	31,200	13
2002	208,300	34	31,100	14
2001	220,400	37	33,100	14
2000	217,100	37	33,000	14
1999	229,800	40	37,100	16
1998	235,900	41	33,100	16
1997	259,800	44	38,200	17
1996	270,100	46	37,200	17
1995	259,300	45	37,800	18

[1] Figures have been rounded to the nearest hundred.

Graduate Employment

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research her Department has commissioned into employment rates of graduates; and if she will make a statement. [15498]

Bill Rammell: Graduates have very high employment rates, reflecting the economy's strong demand for these higher level skills that are developed through participation in higher education. Graduates are significantly more likely than non-graduates to be in work, as well as enjoying greater pay and wider benefits like better health.

Data from the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey measures first degree graduate activity at a point six months after graduation. The most recent information, covering students who graduated in 2003/04, shows that 64 per cent. were in employment, 15 per cent. were undertaking further study, 9 per cent. were combining work with further study, and just 7 per cent. were unemployed. The remainder were not available for employment for various reasons.

The survey data also shows early indication that students who have studied shorter, more vocationally oriented courses such as Foundation Degrees are less likely to be unemployed than other graduates. This is very encouraging as most of the future growth in student numbers will come through these courses. The data on Foundation Degree graduates show: 36 per cent. were in employment, 33 per cent. were in further study, 26 per cent. were in employment and study, and 3 per cent. were unemployed, six months after leaving their course.

However, the main drawback of using the DLHE survey is that it is only a snapshot of the activity of graduates six months after graduation, which is not necessarily representative of their long-term employability. A study of the early careers of a sample of 1995 graduates shows employment rates rising rapidly in the months and years shortly following graduation, as the new graduates integrate into the labour market. By seven years after graduation, the overwhelming majority of graduates are in paid work or study, while just 1–2 per cent. of graduates remain unemployed[1].

A study that tracks the labour market outcomes of 1999 graduates up to four years after graduation will be published on the 27 October 2005.

A cross-section of all (both recent and experienced) graduates in the labour market is available from the Labour Force Survey. Spring 2005 data shows that the employment rate of those with NVQ Level 4 and above as their highest qualification is significantly higher than those with lower qualifications.

Employment and unemployment rates by highest qualification, England, spring 2005

Percentage

	Employment rate	*Unemployment rate*
NVQ Level 4 and above	87	3
NVQ Level 3	78	3
NVQ Level 2	76	5
Below NVQ Level 2	73	6
No qualifications	48	9

Source:
LFS, Spring 2005. Working-age population only.

Harlington Upper School

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the effects on students at Harlington Upper School in Bedfordshire during recent examinations, on building works under a private finance initiative project. [17637]

Jacqui Smith: It is most regrettable if any disturbances are suffered by pupils during their public examinations. Officials have spoken to the local authority about this matter and the local authority has given its apologies for the disturbances suffered by the pupils concerned. The local authority envisaged that the measures put in place prior to the examination period would prevent any disturbance and acted to stop the noise as soon as problems were encountered. I am happy to confirm that all the details of the disturbances were reported to the examination boards so that due consideration could be given to the individual pupils involved.

Home Economics

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools have facilities for the practical teaching of food preparation. [17950]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Central Government capital support for investment in schools has increased from under £700 million in 1996–97 to £5.5 billion this year and will rise further to £6.3 billion by 2007–08. Progress is being made year-by-year in improving the quality of the school building stock.

Learning and Skills Council

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the availability of college-certificated courses of changes in Learning and Skills Council funding allocations in *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* 2006–07. [19084]

Bill Rammell: We have been clear about our priorities for public funding of a place in school, college or an apprenticeship for all young people, and a focus on adults without a solid foundation of employability skills. Prioritising public funding and ensuring adults can gain a Skills for Life or first full Level 2 qualification inevitably means less public funding being available for lower priority or non-qualification bearing provision.

Reference:

[1] See Elias, P *et al* (2002) "Moving On: Graduate Careers Three Years After Graduation", DFES/HECSU and Purcell, K. and Elias, P (2004): "Seven Years On: Graduate Careers in a Changing Labour Market", HECSU.

However, we see no reason to close courses which people value but a new balance of responsibilities between Government, employers and learners is central to delivering our Skills Strategy.

This requires a fundamental shift in expectations and practice about who pays for what. We will continue to provide fee concessions for learners on low incomes to access FE but we also expect adult learners, who can afford to do so, to make a contribution to the costs of their learning. Finding a new balance of responsibilities between Government, employers and learners is crucial.

In addition we have safe guarded funding for non-vocational learning, delivered mainly through local authority adult education services. In 2004/05 we provided over £207 million to the LSC in support of this learning. This has risen to £210 million in 2005/06.

Post-16 Education

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the cost of raising per capita funding for 16 to 18-year-olds in further education colleges to the level of funding for 16 to 18-year-olds in schools. [19341]

Bill Rammell: Research conducted by the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) found the funding gap between school sixth forms and further education colleges to be in the region of 13 per cent. LSDA's report suggested complete closure of the gap would cost around £200 million. It also noted that the means of closing the gap should not be a large general increase in FE funding rates, but policy changes aimed at putting FE colleges and school sixth forms on a more equal footing. In light of this we are exploring the scope for addressing technical anomalies between school sixth form and further education systems and will be announcing decisions on the way forward shortly.

Recycling

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps her Department takes to ensure that furniture no longer required following school refurbishments is recycled or reused. [18203]

Jacqui Smith: We do not currently give any detailed guidance on this specific issue. However, as part of our forthcoming publication on sustainable schools we are consulting on new approaches to waste management. Re-cycling of products are mentioned in the section entitled 'our expectations'. This consultation will take place in January 2006.

School Meals

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the provision of dining facilities in *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools. [17767]

Jacqui Smith: The Department holds data on the condition and suitability of school buildings, supplied by authorities as part of Asset Management Planning. This includes a 'kitchen/dining' category.

As part of the Department's Healthy Food in Schools initiative, we intend to commission a detailed survey of dining and kitchen facilities, which will form part of research for a forthcoming guide on school meals.

Central Government capital support for investment in schools has increased from under £700 million in 1996–97 to £5.5 billion this year and will rise further to £6.3 billion by 2007–08. The BSF programme has committed £2 billion a year to remodel or rebuild every secondary school in England. The Primary capital programme of £150 million in 2008–09 and £500 million in 2009–10 will support a programme to renew at least half of all primary schools over the next 15 years. This will be an opportunity for any shortcomings in dining facilities to be addressed. Progress is being made year-by-year in improving the quality of the school building stock.

Special Measures

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many secondary schools in special measures are designated for replacement by city academies. [17706]

Jacqui Smith: There are currently 21 secondary schools in special measures which are being actively considered for replacement by academies.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools have been in special measures for more than one year. [17707]

Jacqui Smith: Currently there are 68 primary schools and 52 secondary schools which have been in special measures for longer than 12 months. There are also five PRUs, two middle and 13 special schools which have been in special measures for more than 12 months.

Teacher Dismissals

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers were dismissed for having sexual relations with pupils in London in each year since 1997. [16019]

Jacqui Smith: The information cannot be provided in the format requested.

Twenty-First Century Science Examination

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the use of the OCR GCSE examination Twenty-First Century Science in secondary schools. [17898]

Jacqui Smith: The Twenty First Century suite of science GCSEs is being piloted in 79 centres, including community, foundation, voluntary aided and independent schools and one adult education college. Early indications from the pilot are that it has had a very positive effect. The new programme of study for science at Key Stage 4 will be introduced in schools in September 2006.

University Applications

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many students have applied through UCAS for university places in the United Kingdom in each of the last five years; [17817]

(2) how many students *(a)* successfully obtained and *(b)* failed to obtain a university place through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service clearing system in each of the last five years; [17818]

(3) how many students have opted to defer entry to university in each of the last five years. [17819]

Bill Rammell: The latest available information for the last five completed application cycles is shown in the following table.

UK and overseas applicants to full-time undergraduate courses in the UK

	Year of entry				
	2000/01	*2001/02*	*2002/03*	*2003/04*	*2004/05*
All applicants of which:	442,030	453,835	461,365	476,465	486,030
Accepted for entry	339,745	358,040	368,115	374,305	377,545
Not accepted	102,280	95,790	93,250	102,160	108,485
Accepted applicants who:					
Gained a place via clearing:	45,420	43,255	39,755	38,665	34,860
UK students who deferred entry	22,705	26,170	26,930	26,440	25,935

Note:
Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5, so components may not sum to totals.
Source:
Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)

Final figures for the 2005/06 academic year will not become available until January 2006. However, the latest information from UCAS, based on the position at 26 September for each of the last three years, is shown in the following table:

UK and overseas applicants to full-time undergraduate courses in the UK in 2005/06, as at 26 September

	2003/04	*2004/05*	*2005/06*
All applicants of which:	468,550	480,200	516,715
Accepted for entry	363,140	369,695	398,215
Not accepted	105,410	110,505	118,500
Accepted applicants who:			
Gained a place via Clearing	35,140	32,775	34,965
Deferred entry[1]	n/a	25,910	28,240

n/a = not available
[1] Figures for deferrals are based on the position as at 14 September.
Note:
Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5, so components may not sum to totals.
Source:
Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)

Vocational/Academic Education

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research her Department has commissioned into public attitudes towards *(a)* vocational and *(b)* academic education; and if she will make a statement. [15500]

Phil Hope: The Department has commissioned questions in the British Social Attitude Survey, a major annual independent survey undertaken by the National Centre for Social Research. In surveys prior to 2005 these questions included:

If the respondent was to advise a 16-year-old about their future, whether they would say that they should stay in full-time education to get A levels, study full time to get vocational qualifications, or leave school to get a job (1990, 2002, 2004);

In the long run, whether having good practical skills and training, or having good academic results gives people more opportunities and choice in life (1993, 1995, 2002, 2004).

Additional questions were also added to the survey in 2005 to ask:

Out of every 100 people finishing school at 16, how many do the respondents think go on to do academic qualifications, and how many do more work-related qualifications;

How far respondents agree or disagree with the following statements:

- Only people who can't do academic qualifications should do vocational ones;
- Vocational qualifications are easier than academic qualifications;
- Most people don't understand what vocational qualifications are;
- Employers don't respect vocational qualifications enough;
- Schools should do more to encourage young people to do vocational qualifications.

The National Centre for Social Research publishes the results of these surveys each year. Copies of the published reports are available in the DfES library. The results from the most recent surveys in 2004 and 2005 have not yet been published.

The Department has commissioned the Public Perception of Education in 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2005. This is a survey of the general public of attitudes towards the education and skills system.

Independently, the Learning and Skills Council published the results from a survey undertaken by BMRB. The survey asked respondents in Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Sweden whether they thought academic or vocational skills were most important for a career.

Research provides a useful indicator of the general public's attitude on educational issues. The Department is aware that work-based learning is considered of lower status to academic learning. That is why we are introducing specialised Diplomas as part of our 14–19 White Paper reforms.

Volunteering

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many volunteering positions her Department has offered in each of the last five years. [17871]

Maria Eagle: My Department does not hold data on the number of volunteering positions offered in each of the last five years and could provide the information only at disproportionate cost.

My Department is committed to offering volunteering opportunities to staff and to provide release time to undertake them. We have published a

volunteering strategy and as of 1 October 2005, 246 staff members have taken part in volunteering activities in various capacities. Of this number, 102 are school governors and 12 mentors at universities. In addition, 132 staff are participating in volunteering activities in their local communities as part of the Community Service Volunteers initiative in November 2005. Another 44 have been trained as mentors for primary, secondary and university students.

My Department remains committed to volunteering activity and working closely with Community Service Volunteers to increase the number of volunteering opportunities available to staff.

Youth Services

Edward Miliband: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was available for youth services in *(a)* England, *(b)* South Yorkshire and *(c)* Doncaster North in each of the last 10 years. [15067]

Phil Hope: Youth services are funded through the local authority and information about the level of funding is collected by local education authority (LEA) area. This information has only been available separately since 2000. Therefore, I am in a position to give funding levels for the Youth Service in England as a whole, and for the Youth Service within South Yorkshire and Doncaster by LEA area, from that date. However, it is not possible to provide information about Youth Service funding below LEA level in order to show the funding for Doncaster North.

Youth Service funding levels

£

Financial year	*England*	*South Yorkshire*	*Doncaster LEA*
2000–01	288,026,510	9,552,682	1,816,240
2001–02	306,761,605	9,668,217	1,904,340
2002–03	316,288,138	9,501,744	2,017,290
2003–04	343,364,777	10,128,282	2,227,130
2004–05	363,095,777	10,863,148	2,334,540
2005–06	383,662,949	11,105,125	2,369,570

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Serious and Complex Cases

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Solicitor-General pursuant to the answers of 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1–2W, if he will list those serious and complex cases in which all proceedings are complete about which the Army Prosecution Authority consulted the Attorney-General since 1997. [17303]

The Solicitor-General: The Army Prosecuting Authority (APA) routinely consults the Attorney-General before directing trial in serious cases where there is joint jurisdiction. For instance a court martial has jurisdiction in cases where a person subject to military law faces a charge before court martial of murder/manslaughter committed outside the United Kingdom. Consequently, before directing trial in cases of murder or manslaughter committed outside of the United Kingdom the APA would consult the Attorney-General as a matter of course.

In cases of offences committed against the criminal law of England and Wales, but committed outside of the United Kingdom and where the defendant has ceased to be subject to military law since committing the offence the APA is obliged by statute to obtain the consent of the Attorney-General before directing trial (section 132, sub-section 3A of the Army Act 1955).

Recently the APA has consulted the Attorney-General regarding allegations of serious offences committed on military operations in Iraq. The Attorney-General has undertaken to inform Parliament when charges are brought in such cases.

Volunteering

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Solicitor-General how many volunteering positions the Law Officers' Department have offered in each of the last five years. [17881]

The Solicitor-General: This answer covers the following Departments for which I am an accountable Minister, namely the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), the Treasury Solicitor's Department (TSol), HM CPS Inspectorate (HMCPSI), the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) and the Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office (RCPO),

Crown Prosecution Service

The CPS supports volunteering in the community. It has a policy in place to encourage staff to share their knowledge, skills and lime, which includes the provision of one day's paid. leave.

In addition, the Department has sponsored 53 staff in the last five years to take part in the Prince's Trust Volunteer Scheme and has just launched a campaign to encourage staff to join the Government Legal Service and Institute of Paralegals Pro-bono Schemes.

The number of staff who undertake voluntary work is not recorded centrally. This information can, therefore, be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

TSol

TSol does not offer volunteering positions itself but as a member of the Government Legal Service (GLS) has had a number of staff who have volunteered for the GLS Pro Bono Network, or as a magistrate, school governor or trustee of a charity.

Additionally Treasury Solicitor's Department signed up to the Government's 'Active Communities Challenge' in April 2001, which allows staff one day's paid special leave per year to undertake 'community or voluntary work which is for the benefit of others outside their immediate friends and family'. The take up of this leave allowance in each of the last five years has been;

	Individuals	*Days total*
2001–02	3	3
2002–03	6	5.5
2003–04	2	1
2004–05	1	1
2005–06	[1]0	[1]0

[1] To date

HMCPSI

Since 2000 HMCPSI has invited suitably informed members of the public, nominated by national organisations, to join the inspection process as lay inspectors, These inspectors are unpaid volunteers who examine the way in which the CPS relates to the public, through its dealings with witnesses and victims, its external communication and liaison, its handling of complaints and the application of the public interest test contained in the Code for Crown Prosecutors.

The numbers recruited per year has decreased as only one lay inspector is needed for each inspection, and the policy is that all lay inspectors to have an opportunity to join an inspection team for two to four days throughout the year.

	New lay inspectors inducted
2000	16
2001	28
2002	11
2003	0
2004	2
2005	1

HMCPSI also allows staff to apply for special leave for participating in voluntary service. We currently have one member of staff who is granted two days per year for voluntary work.

SFO

The SFO has offered and filled one volunteering position in the last five years. This was in 2003 and as part of the Prince's Trust Volunteer Scheme.

RCPO

RCPO, as a new Department, has not yet finalised a volunteering strategy but will consider requests under the current provision for special leave.

RCPO does not maintain a central record of special leave.

TRANSPORT

A11

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the regional consultation process on the dualling of the A11 in Suffolk will be completed. [19690]

Dr. Ladyman: Advice from Eastern region on its priorities for transport investment, including the A11 Fiveways to Thetford improvement scheme, within Regional Funding Allocations is expected at the end of January 2006.

Barge Drivers

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the minimum period of training is for barge drivers on the Thames. [19241]

Dr. Ladyman: For barges trading to sea, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency stipulates an appropriate standards of training, certification and watchkeeping, (STCW 1995, International Maritime Organization) qualification and minimum training requirements.

For barges trading within the port, there are no statutory training and qualification requirements in place at present. But those navigating commercially in the port would generally have either a Waterman's or Lighterman's licence. The new Boatmaster's Licence for Inland Waterways, due to become law during 2006, will extend competency requirements to freight carrying vessels in categorised waters

Burn Closes Bridge

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received from North Tyneside borough council in relation to closure of Burn Closes Bridge in the interest of public safety. [18590]

Dr. Ladyman: Government Office for the North East officials have had several meetings during the last three years or so with North Tyneside council officials at which the council raised the need for major structural maintenance of a number of bridges in the borough. The Department for Transport provides specific funding for highway structural maintenance to bridges on the Primary Route Network and since 2003–04 has allocated funding totalling £3.224 million to the council for bridges in North Tyneside at Hadrian Road (A187) and the Coast Road (A1058) at Blue House. This funding is in addition to the £9.944 million local transport "block" allocation to North Tyneside council since 2003–04.

Burns Closes Bridge is not on the Primary Route Network and is not, therefore, considered to be an immediate national priority for funding. However, it is recognised that closure of the bridge pending maintenance/reconstruction work, is causing considerable inconvenience to local residents and bus services and therefore I have asked my officials to continue to liaise with the council as it considers the various options for addressing the problem, with a view to assessing the extent to which we are able provide support.

Congestion/Pollution

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research has been commissioned on the effects on levels of *(a)* congestion and *(b)* carbon emissions of the closure of local (i) post offices, (ii) banks and (iii) shops. [18493]

Dr. Ladyman: No such specific research has been commissioned.

Exeter Airport

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the Competition Commission's inquiry into Exeter airport. [19113]

Ms Buck: This is a matter for the Competition Commission and for the parties involved.

Left-hand Drive Vehicles

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many road accidents in England involved left-hand drive commercial vehicles in the last period for which figures are available. [19322]

Dr. Ladyman: Personal injury road accident data in Great Britain is collected by the police and reported to the Department using the STATS19 accident report format. Until 30 December 2004 this information included whether an involved vehicle had a foreign registration plate, but not whether it was right or left-hand drive. Due to concerns about the consistency and accuracy of the data collected, a recommendation to update this variable was accepted as part of the 5-year rolling review of the collection system. From 1 January 2005 the information collected will specifically distinguish left and right-hand drive foreign registered vehicles, but figures will not be available until autumn 2006.

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many accidents involving *(a)* loss of life and *(b)* injuries were caused by visitors from abroad failing to drive on the left-hand side of the road in England in the last period for which figures are available. [19323]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not available.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to make a substantive response to the named day written question of 12 July from the hon. Member for West Chelmsford concerning rail passenger journeys between Chelmsford and London Liverpool Street. [17108]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* This information is not held centrally by the Department. However, data from the Office of Rail Regulation shows that the number of rail passenger journeys made between Chelmsford and Liverpool Street in 1997 was 1,675,280. The corresponding figure for 2003–04 was 2,122,388. Both figures include travelcard journeys.

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 13 October to Question ref. 17108, what the reasons are for the time taken to provide a substantive answer to the question tabled on 12 July. [19537]

Derek Twigg: I will be writing to the hon. Member today and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Railway Staff

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what provision he is making for the protection of railway staff from assault. [18305]

Derek Twigg: The Secure Stations Scheme, directed by the Department for Transport and the British Transport Police (BTP), aims to improve the security of both passengers and staff.

The Rail Safety and Standards Board's Rail Personal Security Group has taken a number of initiatives including publishing a good practice guide on the reporting and recording of staff assaults, and launching a poster campaign to highlight the unacceptability of assaults against rail staff.

BTP have developed local initiatives in partnership with train operating companies including participating in conflict management training for rail staff, identifying repeat victims, sharing data with employers to identify specific risk areas and assisting victims of serious assault back into the workplace. They also pioneered the use of DNA kits for rail staff so they can capture suspects' DNA which police investigators then compare against the DNA database.

The BTP is currently meeting its detection target of a 40 per cent. detection rate for staff assaults; the Scottish Area is currently detecting 60 per cent.; and the North Western Area just under 55 per cent.

Road Safety

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many and what proportion of fatal road traffic accidents have involved drivers under the age of 20 years in each of the last five years. [18838]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is in the table.

Fatal road accidents involving one or more car[1] drivers aged under 20-years-old: 2000–04

	Number	*As a percentage of all fatal road accidents*
2000	271	8.7
2001	324	70.2
2002	315	10.1
2003	329	10.1
2004	367	12.3

[1] Includes taxis, invalid tricycles, three and four wheel cars and minibuses.

Security Exercises (London Underground)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what security exercises were undertaken by Visor consultants in or around London Underground stations in the week preceding 7 July. [16048]

Ms Buck: None.

Thames (Navigational Standards)

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussion he has held with the Port of London Authority on navigational standards on the Thames. [19327]

Dr. Ladyman: The Port of London Authority (PLA) has been substantially involved at the national level, in the development and forthcoming introduction of the new Inland Waterways Freight Standards—both competency (Boatmasters Licence) and vessel technical standards. These standards will apply in UK categorised waters, which includes the Port of London.

The PLA was also involved in the development of the Port Marine Safety Code.

In addition, the Department has been working with the PLA on the development of transponder technology, which would allow passenger and large commercial vessels to track other such vessels. With the

PLA, we are currently considering the practical implications of introducing this technology on the Thames.

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many Thames bridges have been struck by barges in the last *(a)* five and *(b)* 10 years; how many bridges have been closed as a consequence in each case; how many such strikes have been caused (i) in whole and (ii) in part by navigational errors; and how many involved barge drivers who were (A) undergoing training and (B) not fully qualified. [19240]

Dr. Ladyman: Thames bridges have been struck by self-propelled barges on three occasions in the last five years and by dumb barges under tow on two occasions.

Thames bridges have been struck by self-propelled barges on four occasions in the last 10 years and by dumb barges under tow on six occasions.

Bridges have been closed to road/rail traffic on three occasions as a result of the above incidents—Battersea Rail Bridge was closed overnight, then re-opened with a speed restriction until repairs were completed; Westminster Bridge had a footway on one side closed until repairs were completed and Battersea Bridge is currently open to buses, cyclists and pedestrians only.

In addition, single bridge arches have been closed (all or in part) to river traffic on three occasions as a result of the above incidents.

One incident is still under investigation but the remaining incidents all involved misjudgement or miscalculation by the person navigating.

We are aware of one incident where the vessel was being navigated by the Mate, who was under the supervision of the Master at the time.

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what reports he has received on the causes of the recent strike at Battersea Bridge. [19326]

Dr. Ladyman: The PLA is currently investigating the incident under the Port of London Act 1968. It is also investigating the incident from a safety of navigation perspective. Both investigations are ongoing.

MAIB is conducting an administrative enquiry and is awaiting the outcome of the PLA investigation before deciding if further action is required.

The MCA has investigated this incident and has taken the view that it has no grounds for a prosecution under the Merchant Shipping Act 1995.

Western Orbital Route

Sir Patrick Cormack: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he plans to re-instate the Western Orbital Route in the road programme; and if he will make a statement. [19073]

Dr. Ladyman: A motorway scheme known as the Western Orbital Route was dropped from the Roads Programme in 1996. This remains the current position and there are no plans to re-instate the scheme.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

"Streets for All"

Mr. Michael Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the cost was of producing and distributing English Heritage's "Streets for All", streetscape manual for the West Midlands. [19331]

Mr. Lammy: The total cost of producing and distributing English Heritage's "Streets for All", streetscape manual for the West Midlands Region is estimated at just over £48,000.

Alcohol Licences

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what assessment the Government have made of the impact of extending licences for the sale of alcohol in residential areas; [18499]

(2) what assessment the Government have made of the impact of extending licences for the sale of alcohol in areas with a high level of binge drinking. [18500]

James Purnell: The Government believes that current fixed opening hours encourage binge drinking before last orders and create flashpoints for conflict through late night queuing for transport and fast food. In addition, the current system only allows pubs, bars and clubs to have extended house if they provide music and dancing. This means that the late night economy is dominated by activities that carry greater risk of nuisance and are aimed primarily at the younger market. We anticipate that the Licensing Act 2003, which takes effect from 24 November, will enable a greater variety of premises to adopt flexible hours and also encourage a safer, more orderly and gradual dispersal of customers. The Act also provides the police with a raft of new powers for tackling disorderly and criminal behaviour and grants responsible authorities and interested parties, such as local residents, the right to challenge a licence application or to ask for a review of an existing licence. Recent feedback from local authorities confirms that local residents are already taking full advantage of their new rights. My Department will closely monitor and evaluate the impact of the Act on crime and disorder to ensure that the Act delivers on our promise to provide a more civilised late night society.

BBC Services

Mr. Michael Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will ensure that public value and market impact tests relating to BBC services are undertaken by Ofcom. [18604]

James Purnell: The Government's policy regarding public value and market impact tests relating to BBC services will be laid out in the forthcoming White Paper on BBC Charter Review.

Mr. Michael Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will define specific areas where the BBC should offer assistance to local commercial media in their migration from a traditional to a digital media platform. [18602]

James Purnell: The Government have no plans to require the BBC to offer such assistance to local commercial media.

Mr. Michael Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps she is taking to ensure transparency in the BBC's investments in local services. [18965]

James Purnell: The Green Paper on BBC Charter Review outlines a new plan for BBC governance with a view to ensuring openness and transparency. Policy in this area will be laid out in more detail in the forthcoming White Paper on BBC Charter Review.

Licensing

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many applications for *(a)* premises licences, *(b)* late night refreshment licences and *(c)* club premises certificates have been made in each local authority area; and how many and what percentage of such applications were rejected in each category. [17209]

James Purnell *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* Comprehensive data on applications of the kind requested are not currently available, but my Department estimates that around 186,000 applications for premises licences and club premises certificates were submitted by 7 October 2005—about 93 percent. of the total applications expected.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the effects on community halls' budgets of the Licensing Act 2003. [17096]

James Purnell: Our aim has been to create a fair and effective licensing system that does not impose unnecessary costs and burdens. We believe that community halls will benefit from being able to provide a wide range of activities (such as live music, theatre or cinema) under a single licence, rather than having to apply for several licences and permissions as is the case under the current regime.

Unless alcohol is to be sold at events, there will be no requirement for community halls to pay for the licence for regulated entertainment, such as live music, theatre, and cinema. Once this licence has been obtained, there will be no need for further applications, unless the terms of the licence need to be changed. In addition, halls should no longer be subject to high compliance costs of disproportionate standard conditions that often apply under the current public entertainment licensing regime.

However, we are aware that some community and village halls have concerns about their ability to work within the new regime. We therefore asked action with communities in rural England (ACRE) to join our high level hroup of key stakeholders to represent these concerns. ACRE are conducting an evaluation project to review the impact of the act on village halls. The licensing fees review panel is also considering the impact of fees on a wide range of stakeholders, including community and village halls. We will consider carefully the evidence from these reviews and any recommendations to help community and village halls operate within the new regime.

TV Licences

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many concessionary television licences for elderly people have been issued in each of the last two years, broken down by Northern Ireland parliamentary constituency. [19579]

James Purnell: TV Licensing, who administer free television licences for people aged 75 or over as agents for the BBC, are not able to provide geographical breakdowns of the number of concessionary licences issued. However, 2001 Census data indicate that the approximate number of individuals aged 75 or over living in each constituency in Northern Ireland was:

	Number
Belfast, East	7,474
Belfast, North	6,498
Belfast, South	6,488
Belfast, West	4,083
East Antrim	4,968
East Londonderry	5,014
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	5,723
Foyle	4,203
Lagan Valley	5,858
Mid Ulster	4,333
Newry and Armagh	5,229
North Antrim	6,492
North Down	7,301
South Antrim	4,891
South Down	5,798
Strangford	5,850
Upper Bann	5,590
West Tyrone	4,344

Information is not held centrally on the number of retired people aged 60 or over in each parliamentary constituency living in accommodation which qualifies for the Accommodation for Residential Care concessionary scheme.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people were fined for not having a television licence in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [18331]

James Purnell: Information is available only for England, Scotland and Wales. Data for England and Wales relates to all offences under the Wireless Telegraphy Acts of 1949 and 1967 and data for Scotland to offences under the 1949 Act. Most though not all offences recorded under these Acts involve television licence evasion. The number of people fined in each of the last five years for which information was available was:

	Number of people fined[1]
1999[2]	55,280
2000	105,203
2001	83,200
2002	95,757
2003	81,126

[1] On the principal offence basis.

[2] 999 data for Scotland is incomplete.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Environmental Audits

Peter Law: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what recent audits of *(a)* energy use, *(b)* energy efficiency, *(c)* waste disposal and *(d)* recycling in the House have been carried out. [18273]

Nick Harvey: Energy use and waste disposal and recycling related to the Parliamentary Estate are monitored monthly and trends are plotted in a monthly management report by the Serjeant at Arms. Energy efficiency is more complex to assess due to the difficulty of benchmarking similar buildings to the Palace of Westminster, a vast listed building used for long periods in the day: figures available do however demonstrate that energy consumption per square metre of floor area has reduced in recent years. An independent environmental survey of the parliamentary estate was completed by Urban Mines Ltd. last year, and a copy of the report was placed in the House of Commons Library.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Asylum/Immigration

Jenny Willott: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many asylum appeals lodged *(a)* before and *(b)* after 4 April were processed and determined by the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal in (i) April, (ii) May, (iii) June, (iv) July, (v) August, (vi) September and (vii) October to date; and if she will make a statement. [18974]

Bridget Prentice: The latest provisional figures available from the electronic database of the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) indicate that, at the end of June 2005, the number of asylum appeal decisions determined by the AIT in each month from April to the end of June 2005 is as follows:

Asylum appeals determined which were lodged prior to 4 April 2005

	Number
April	3,528
May	3,025
June	2,194

Asylum appeals determined which were lodged after 4 April 2005

	Number
April	44
May	246
June	1,047

Statistical data confirming the numbers of asylum appeals determined in the period beyond June 2005 is not yet currently available.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* asylum appeals and *(b)* immigration appeals have been lodged with the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal since 4 April; and if she will make a statement. [18976]

Bridget Prentice: The latest provisional figures available from the database of the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) indicate that, at the end of June 2005, 3,550 asylum appeals, and 8,200 immigration appeals (comprising in country and entry clearance cases but not family visitor appeals) had been lodged with the AIT.

Statistical data confirming the numbers of appeals received beyond the end of June 2005 is not yet currently available.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* asylum appeals and *(b)* immigration appeals lodged with the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal and its predecessor bodies before 4 April are outstanding; and if she will make a statement. [18977]

Bridget Prentice: The latest provisional figures available from the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) indicate that, at the end of June 2005, *(a)* 12,650 asylum appeals and *(b)* 17,550 immigration appeals (comprising in country and entry clearance cases but not family visitor appeals) were outstanding before the AIT.

Outstanding cases are those either listed and awaiting hearing before an immigration judge, or appeals that have been heard and that await determination by the immigration judge.

Statistical data confirming the numbers of outstanding appeals before the AIT beyond the end of June 2005 is not yet currently available.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the current backlog is of cases at the Immigration Tribunal; how many are *(a)* asylum cases, *(b)* immigration cases and *(c)* family visitors cases; and what steps have been taken to reduce the backlog of cases. [18954]

Bridget Prentice: The latest provisional figures available from the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) show that, at the end of June 2005, *(a)* 12, 650 asylum appeals, *(b)* 17,550 immigration appeals (comprising in country and entry clearance cases) and *(c)* 17,800 family visitor appeals, were outstanding before the AIT.

Outstanding cases are those either listed and awaiting hearing before an immigration judge, or appeals that have been heard and that await determination by the immigration judge.

The latest manual figures, as at 10 October 2005, show that approximately 36,800 appeals (of which 27,900 are family visitor cases and 8,900 are entry clearance immigration appeals) were awaiting initial acknowledgement and case management at the AIT. Those cases are considered to be backlogged.

The AIT is taking recovery action to resolve the backlog of case processing. This includes a significant increase in administrative resource; process re-evaluation and changes; and the re-organisation of key

functions. All backlogged cases are due to have been acknowledged and case managed initially by the end of December 2005, with appeals being heard over the course of 2006.

Consultants

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much the Department spent on external consultants in 2004–05. [18948]

Bridget Prentice: This information is not held centrally by my Department but is collected on an annual basis. The data collection exercise relating to expenditure on consultancy in 2004–05 is currently underway, and on completion of it, details of the expenditure will be sent to the hon. Member.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Africa Directorate

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what work the Africa Directorate is planning to outsource in 2005–06; and what criteria are used to decide which work is outsourced; [17409]

(2) what the Africa Directorate budget was in *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003, *(c)* 2004 and *(d)* 2005; [17413]

(3) how many people were employed in British embassies in Africa in *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003, *(c)* 2004 and *(d)* 2005; [17415]

(4) whether he plans to recruit additional staff to the Africa Directorate. [17442]

Ian Pearson: Since 2002 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has increased its financial and human resources in Africa. The budget of the FCO's Africa Directorate rose from £35.1million in the financial year 2002–03 to £48.8 million in the current financial year (FY 2005–06). The budget for FY 2006–07 has not yet been finalised. The overall numbers of staff (FCO and locally engaged) employed in our posts in Africa increased from 2,221 in 2002 to 2,509 in 2005.

There have been reductions in the overall numbers of staff in Africa Directorate in London as part of the broader reorganisation of the FCO to deliver the FCO's international strategy and to meet efficiency targets. The Directorate currently has 54 staff. There are no present plans to increase this. But in addition to staff in Africa Directorate itself, many other FCO personnel in London also work on Africa, including on counter-terrorism, sustainable development and human rights.

The FCO and Africa Directorate regularly review the numbers, grading, functions and location of FCO staff in Africa in order to ensure the effective delivery of the Government's strategic priorities and value for money. Some posts in Africa contract out a number of services such as guarding, cleaning and estate maintenance. There are currently no plans to outsource any of the Directorate's core activities in the region.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) if he will increase the budget of the African Directorate within the Department; [18531]

(2) for what reasons the staffing of the African Directorate has been reduced; and what steps are planned to review the effectiveness of the new arrangements; [18536]

(3) what criteria will be used by the African Directorate to determine in which African countries the UK has the most significant interests. [18537]

Ian Pearson: Since 2002 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has increased its financial and human resources in Africa. The budget of the FCO's Africa Directorate rose from £35.1 million in the financial year 2002–03 to £48.8 million in the current financial year (FY 2005–06). The budget for FY 2006–07 has not yet been finalised. The overall numbers of staff (FCO and locally engaged) employed in our posts in Africa increased from 2,221 in 2002 to 2,509 in 2005.

There have been reductions in the overall numbers of staff in Africa Directorate in London as part of the broader reorganisation of the FCO to deliver the FCO's international strategy and to meet efficiency targets. The Directorate currently has 54 staff. There are no present plans to increase this. But in addition to staff in Africa Directorate itself, many other FCO personnel in London also work on Africa, including on counter-terrorism, sustainable development and human rights.

The FCO and Africa Directorate regularly review the numbers, grading, functions and location of FCO staff in Africa in order to ensure the effective delivery of the Government's strategic priorities and value for money. Some posts in Africa contract out a number of services such as guarding, cleaning and estate maintenance. There are currently no plans to outsource any of the Directorate's core activities in the region.

Ahmiddiya Muslims (Pakistan)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Government of Pakistan about protecting the lives and property of the minority Ahmiddiya Muslims in the country, with particular reference to the shootings at the Ahmadiyya Mosque in Mundi Bahauddin on 9 October; and if he will make a statement. [19350]

Dr. Howells: We regularly make known our concerns on the treatment of religious minorities, including Ahmiddiya Muslims, to the Government of Pakistan. We believe that collective action through the European Union is the most effective way of tackling these issues. The most recent European Union demarche to the Pakistani authorities of 20 June 2005 on human rights included the treatment of religious minorities. We have not made any specific representations regarding the shootings at the Ahmadiyya Mosque in Mundi Bahauddin on 9 October.

The United Kingdom condemns instances where individuals are persecuted because of their faith, wherever it happens and whatever the religion of the

individual or group concerned. We take a serious view of religious persecution in Pakistan and work with officials, religious leaders and non-governmental organisations at both international and local level to promote mutual understanding and tolerance.

Ambassadors/High Commissioners

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many ambassadors and high commissioners do not have a good working knowledge of the primary language of the country to which they are posted; and if he will make a statement. [17313]

Mr. Straw: Save in posts where the primary language is English, all ambassadors and high commissioners are given language training before taking up their posts, usually to refresh existing language skills, to enable them to carry out essential business and representational work. We assess that at least 94 per cent. of them have a good knowledge of the working or at least one of the common working languages of the country to which they are posted. Many of our heads of mission in posts where hard languages are spoken will have qualifications to extensive level from their previous postings to those countries.

British Detainees/Prisoners

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British nationals are *(a)* being detained pre-conviction and *(b)* in detention serving sentences in (i) Egypt, (ii) Jordan, (iii) Turkey, (iv) Syria, (v) Lebanon, (vi) Iraq, (vii) Iran, (viii) Israel, (ix) Algeria, (x) Morocco, (xi) Libya, (xii) Tunisia, (xiii) Pakistan, (xiv) Nigeria, (xv) Sudan, (xvi) Ethiopia, (xvii) Saudi Arabia, (xviii) Oman, (xix) Yemen, (xx) Kuwait and (xxi) United Arab Emirates. [19501]

Dr. Howells: On 30 September 2005, we were aware of the following numbers of British nationals detained pre-conviction and in detention serving sentences:

Country	*Number of British nationals: detained pre-conviction*	*in detention serving sentences*
Egypt	0	5
Jordan	1	0
Turkey	0	1
Syria	0	0
Lebanon	0	0
Iraq	2	0
Iran	0	0
Israel	0	2
Algeria	0	0
Morocco	1	10
Libya	0	0
Tunisia	2	0
Pakistan	19	2
Nigeria	0	0
Sudan	0	0
Ethiopia	0	1
Saudi Arabia	0	1
Oman	0	1
Yemen	1	0
Kuwait	1	0
United Arab Emirates	2	9

Departmental Staff

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many people were employed in *(a)* Africa Command and *(b)* the Africa Directorate in each year between 2002 and 2005. [17642]

Ian Pearson: Since 2002 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has increased its financial and human resources in Africa. The budget of the FCO's Africa Directorate rose from £35.1million in the financial year 2002–03 to £48.8 million in the current financial year (FY 2005–06). The budget for FY 2006–07 has not yet been finalised. The overall numbers of staff (FCO and locally engaged) employed in our posts in Africa increased from 2,221 in 2002 to 2,509 in 2005.

There have been reductions in the overall numbers of staff in Africa Directorate in London as part of the broader reorganisation of the FCO to deliver the FCO's international strategy and to meet efficiency targets. The Directorate currently has 54 staff. There are no present plans to increase this. But in addition to staff in Africa Directorate itself, many other FCO personnel in London also work on Africa, including on counter-terrorism, sustainable development and human rights.

The FCO and Africa Directorate regularly review the numbers, grading, functions and location of FCO staff in Africa in order to ensure the effective delivery of the Government's strategic priorities and value for money. Some posts in Africa contract out a number of services such as guarding, cleaning and estate maintenance. There are currently no plans to outsource any of the Directorate's core activities in the region.

Dr. Gomez de Martinez

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the UK has been asked to participate in the investigation into the death of Dr. John Gomez de Martinez. [19216]

Ian Pearson: Following the death of Dr. John Garang, First Vice President of Sudan, in a helicopter accident in Southern Sudan on 30 July, the international community was asked to assist in investigating the cause of the accident. The UK offered assistance and worked closely with international partners to ensure that a fully effective and well equipped investigation team was formed. In light of partners' assets and expertise already in the region, a UK contribution was not in the end required. The investigation team are currently evaluating data and will report when its findings are complete.

Malaya and Borneo Campaign Medals

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations have been received from the Malaysian Government on awarding a medal to the British veterans involved in campaigns in Malaya and Borneo; and what his response was. [18761]

Mr. Straw: The Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak initially raised the matter of the Pingat Jasa Malaysia (PJM) medal with me in March. In

reply, I was sympathetic, and agreed to pursue the matter with the appropriate authorities. I subsequently requested a review of the Government's rules on the accepting and wearing of non-British awards. The review, which is being co-ordinated by the Cabinet Office, the lead Department on Honours Policy matters, has not yet been completed. We are very conscious of how much the PJM medal means to veterans, and hope that the review will be completed soon.

Since March, the Malaysian Agong (King) has referred to his Government's wish to present the PJM medal in conversations with my noble Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State in the Ministry of Defence (Lord Drayson), and with my hon. Friend the Minister for Trade and Foreign Affairs (Ian Pearson) in August. My hon. Friend explained to the Agong that the matter was under study.

The question of the PJM has also been raised by the Chief of the Malaysian Armed Forces and senior officials in the Malaysian Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the British high commissioner in Kuala Lumpur in September and October. They were informed that the matter was currently under active consideration.

Ministerial Travel

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many air miles were accrued through ministerial travel in his Department in 2004–05, broken down by Minister; how many were *(a)* foregone and *(b)* donated to charity, broken down by charity; and whether air miles accrued by officials were required to be (i) foregone and (ii) given to charity. [17324]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not centrally accrue air miles for Ministerial and official travel nor does it centrally record air miles accrued by Ministers or staff.

FCO Ministers are guided by the Ministerial Code which states that air miles and other benefits earned through travel paid for from public funds, other than where they are de minimis, should be used only for official purposes or else foregone. However there is no objection to Ministers donating them to charity if this is permissible under the terms of the airlines scheme and the charity is one chosen by the airline.

FCO staff are not allowed to use air miles, frequent flyer points or similar incentives, built up from the purchase of tickets paid for from public funds for private purposes. These may only be used for official travel or to fund existing journey entitlements where there is no gain of monetary value (for example the use of special departure facilities or booking arrangements that go with some frequent flyer schemes).

Opium (Afghanistan)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the Government's policy is on dealing with opium production in Afghanistan. [19376]

Dr. Howells: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave the hon. Member for Bognor Regis and Littlehampton (Mr. Gibb) on 6 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 234–35W, on the counter narcotics programme in Afghanistan.

The UK, as lead nation on counter narcotics (CN), remains committed to supporting the Afghan Government in the implementation of their comprehensive 2005 CN Implementation Plan and in updating their National Drug Control Strategy. We continue to work with the Afghan Government and others to increase activity in all areas of their strategy. As well as co-ordinating the activity of international partners, we are providing substantial financial and practical support.

On 5 September, I announced new UK funding for Afghan CN in a joint press conference with Afghan CN Minister Qaderi. The UK is spending in the region of £100 million this year on all CN activity, £50 million of which is for Alternative Livelihoods, and plan to spend over £270 million in financial years 2005–06, 2006–07 and 2007–08, which is a funding increase of £115 million.

I intend to make a further statement to the House in the next month.

Overseas Service (Children's Education)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what factors were taken into account in devising different funding formulae for the contribution made by the Government to the cost of education of children of armed forces personnel and children of diplomatic staff based overseas; and if he will make a statement [18730]

Mr. Straw: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 18 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1376W, which set out the background against which the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) pays school fees.

With staff moving every 12–48 months and education facilities at posts' locations overseas varying, continuity of education can be problematic particularly during the important exam years. The FCO addresses this problem through its Continuity of Education Allowance (CEA), which enables children to board at school in the UK while their parents remain subject to the worldwide mobility obligation.

CEA is based on ceilings, up to which boarding school fees are met. These are set annually at the median of the fees charged by the schools in the Headmasters' Conference within a 70-mile radius of London; most members of the Diplomatic Service have a home near London and choose schools in the south-east. Members of staff must cover the difference themselves if the fees of the boarding school they send their children to exceed the CEA ceilings. The cost of GCSE and A Level exams in subjects that form part of the national curriculum are refunded on top of CEA. The costs of Special Education Needs (SEN) for children who require it are also covered separately in accordance with the recommendations of the appropriate local education authority (LEA).

The FCO does not hold information on the cost of education of children of armed forces personnel. This information is held by the Ministry of Defence.

Turkey

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his Turkish counterparts regarding the imprisonment of Kurdish separatist leader Öcalan. [18731]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has had no discussions with the Turkish Foreign Minister regarding the imprisonment of Öcalan. However, our Embassy in Ankara has followed Öcalan's case closely since his arrest and held discussions with Turkish officials following the European Court of Human Rights ruling on 12 May that Öcalan's trial had not been fair.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions his Department has had with the European Court of Human Rights regarding Kurdish separatist leader Öcalan, imprisoned in Turkey. [18732]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has had no communication with the European Court of Human Rights regarding Öcalan, but has followed developments closely since the Court ruled on 12 May that Öcalan's trial had not been fair. The Council of Europe Committee of Ministers, whose role it is to oversee the implementation of Court judgments, discussed the case at their meeting on 11–12 October, and will do so again at their next meeting in late November. The Turkish authorities are reviewing the case-file to see whether the European Convention on Human Rights violations could have affected the verdict.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the Government's position on Turkey's property rights laws for its non-Muslim citizens. [18733]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government are concerned that the draft Law on Foundations, though a considerable improvement on its predecessor, does not sufficiently address the issue of the return of immovable property to non-Muslim religious foundations. Enlargement Commissioner Rehn wrote to the Turkish Foreign Minister, Abdullah Gul, in June on shortcomings in the draft Law on Foundations and highlighted this specific issue. We continue to monitor the situation and as presidency have raised the matter with the Turkish authorities on a number of occasions.

UK Airspace

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the UK Government allows the use of UK airspace for the extraordinary rendition of those accused of terrorist activities. [19215]

Dr. Howells: The Government are not aware of the use of their territory or airspace for the purposes of 'extraordinary rendition'. The Government have not received any requests, nor granted any permissions, for the use of UK territory or airspace for such purposes.

Under UK and international law, carriers on technical stopovers are not obliged to provide a passenger list, or even, under the Chicago Convention and the US/UK bilateral Air Services Agreement, to obtain permission from the Government to refuel.

The Government's policy is not to deport or extradite any person to another State where there are substantial grounds to believe that the person will be subject to torture or where there is a real risk that the death penalty will be applied.

Visitor Visa Appeals

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many visitor visa appeals lodged *(a)* before and *(b)* after 4 April are outstanding; and if he will make a statement. [18975]

Bridget Prentice: I have been asked to reply.

The latest provisional figures available from the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) indicate that, at the end of June 2005, 17,800 family visitor appeals were considered as outstanding before the AIT.

Outstanding cases are those either listed and awaiting hearing before an immigration judge, or appeals that have been heard and that await determination by the immigration judge.

Statistical data confirming the numbers of family visitor appeals outstanding beyond the end of June 2005 is not yet currently available. It has not been possible to provide further information on the numbers of family visitor appeals lodged both before and after the 4 April 2005 without incurring disproportionate costs.

WORK AND PENSIONS

CSA

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps his Department is taking to monitor *(a)* the performance of the Child Support Agency database and *(b)* the accuracy of CSA payments. [14933]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the requested information.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty to Mr. Jim Cunningham, dated 19 October 2005:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to monitor *(a)* the performance of the Child Support Agency database and *(b)* the accuracy of Child Support Agency payments.

The Child Support Agency has put in place a series of measures along with their suppliers to ensure satisfactory performance of the new computer system including, but not limited to its database. These measures include detailed reporting of service performance and regular meetings to review the effectiveness of the current service. Any issues identified are dealt with promptly by expert resource from both the Department and its IT suppliers.

The Secretary of State sets an accuracy target and receives regular reports from the Agency, which are independently maintained by the Monitoring and Guidance Unit. The Monitoring and Guidance Unit's checks are supplemented by local checks to identify the areas on which we focus attention.

I hope you find this response helpful.

Financial Assistance Scheme

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much has been paid to date by the Financial Assistance Scheme, broken down by pension scheme. [19486]

Mr. Timms: No payments have yet been made by the Financial Assistance Scheme. We hope to be in a position to make the first payments before the end of the calendar year.

Pathways to Work

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the impact of the incapacity benefit pathways to work pilots as of June on *(a)* inflows to jobseeker's allowance, *(b)* levels of economic inactivity and *(c)* numbers of people in paid employment. [14333]

Margaret Hodge: Information on the impact of the incapacity benefit pathways to work pilots is not yet available.

The 'Destination of Benefit Leavers 2004' report found that nationally 52 per cent. of incapacity benefit leavers returned to, or started, work of 16 hours or more.

A further 18 per cent. moved onto another working age benefit, which in 72 per cent. of cases was jobseeker's allowance. This indicates that 13 per cent. of incapacity benefit leavers flowed onto JSA.

This information (as well as findings for lone parent, sick and disabled and JSA unknown destination leavers) can be found in the DWP Research Report no. 244—'Destination of Benefit Leavers 2004', which is available in The Library.

Pension Credit

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in each London constituency *(a)* received state pension, *(b)* applied for pension credit and *(c)* received pension credit in each of the last three years; and what the average pension credit payment was in each year. [16942]

Mr. Timms: The latest available information is in the tables. Information on the number of people who have applied for Pension Credit is not available in respect of individual constituencies. Pension Credit was introduced from October 2003.

Number of state pension recipients within the parliamentary constituencies contained within the London Government office region as at 30 September in the years 2002 to 2004

	September 2002	September 2003	September 2004
Barking	11,200	10,600	10,200
Battersea	9,100	8,600	8,800
Beckenham	17,400	16,800	16,900
Bethnal Green and Bow	11,500	11,100	10,800
Bexleyheath and Crayford	15,600	15,500	15,800
Brent East	10,100	9,700	9,900
Brent North	11,300	11,300	11,500
Brent South	9,600	10,100	10,200
Brentford and Isleworth	14,700	14,800	14,800
Bromley and Chislehurst	18,300	18,400	18,500
Camberwell and Peckham	7,600	7,800	7,600
Carshalton and Wallington	14,300	13,800	14,100
Chingford and Woodford Green	15,800	15,900	16,000
Chipping Barnet	15,400	15,700	15,800
Cities of London and Westminster	13,000	12,900	12,900
Croydon Central	16,400	16,600	16,600
Croydon North	13,900	13,900	13,800
Croydon South	17,500	17,500	17,600
Dagenham	13,700	13,800	13,800
Dulwich and West Norwood	11,800	12,000	11,600
Ealing North	15,200	15,000	14,900
Ealing, Acton and Shepherd's Bush	12,600	12,900	12,900
Ealing, Southall	13,900	13,600	13,500
East Ham	10,500	10,400	10,100
Edmonton	14,700	14,300	13,700
Eltham	13,400	13,300	13,100
Enfield North	13,500	13,400	13,400
Enfield, Southgate	16,200	16,400	16,700
Erith and Thamesmead	11,300	10,900	11,100
Feltham and Heston	13,000	13,100	13,400
Finchley and Golders Green	17,200	17,200	16,600
Greenwich and Woolwich	11,400	10,800	10,700
Hackney North and Stoke Newington	9,300	8,900	8,400
Hackney South and Shoreditch	9,200	8,800	8,900
Hammersmith and Fulham	12,600	12,300	12,200
Hampstead and Highgate	11,900	11,700	11,500
Harrow East	17,200	17,700	17,800
Harrow West	14,700	14,700	15,400
Hayes and Harlington	10,600	10,300	10,200
Hendon	14,800	14,600	15,000
Holborn and St. Pancras	9,700	9,300	9,100
Hornchurch	14,800	15,000	15,200
Hornsey and Wood Green	12,000	12,100	12,400
Ilford North	16,200	16,300	16,100
Ilford South	12,200	11,900	12,100
Islington North	9,500	9,100	9,600
Islington South and Finsbury	9,900	9,500	9,800
Kensington and Chelsea	13,200	13,100	13,000
Kingston and Surbiton	16,200	16,000	15,800
Lewisham East	11,700	12,100	12,100
Lewisham West	11,500	11,400	10,900
Lewisham, Deptford	7,600	7,400	7,500
Leyton and Wanstead	10,800	10,700	11,000
Mitcham and Morden	13,100	12,700	12,600
North Southwark and Bermondsey	10,800	10,300	10,100
Old Bexley and Sidcup	17,800	17,600	18,000
Orpington	21,000	21,300	21,500
Poplar and Canning Town	10,400	10,300	10,100
Putney	10,800	10,600	10,400
Regent's Park and Kensington North	14,400	14,400	14,500
Richmond Park	15,700	15,600	15,700
Romford	14,100	14,600	14,300
Ruislip-Northwood	14,200	14,600	14,700
Streatham	11,000	10,700	10,500
Sutton and Cheam	15,800	15,300	15,300
Tooting	10,300	9,900	9,900
Tottenham	10,400	10,800	10,800
Twickenham	15,400	15,700	15,600
Upminster	16,900	16,800	16,400
Uxbridge	12,000	12,200	11,800
Vauxhall	9,900	9,600	9,700
Walthamstow	10,700	10,700	10,700

Number of state pension recipients within the parliamentary constituencies contained within the London Government office region as at 30 September in the years 2002 to 2004

	September		
	2002	2003	2004
West Ham	9,300	9,100	9,200
Wimbledon	13,000	13,000	13,100
Total	963,300	956,900	956,300

The number of pension credit recipients and average award within the parliamentary constituencies contained within the London Government office region as at February 2004 and 2005

	February 2004		February 2005	
	Number	Amount (£)	Number	Amount (£)
Barking	3,500	53.48	4,300	50.05
Battersea	2,800	56.19	3,100	51.92
Beckenham	2,200	48.71	2,600	44.84
Bethnal Green and Bow	6,500	71.78	7,200	70.93
Bexleyheath and Crayford	2,600	37.60	2,900	37.31
Brent East	3,600	69.70	4,300	64.46
Brent North	2,800	75.20	3,200	68.30
Brent South	4,000	73.70	4,500	71.88
Brentford and Isleworth	3,300	62.32	3,900	60.11
Bromley and Chislehurst	2,800	45.08	3,200	43.22
Camberwell and Peckham	3,800	55.30	3,900	53.89
Carshalton and Wallington	2,500	44.20	3,100	46.23
Chingford and Woodford Green	3,100	49.34	3,600	48.47
Chipping Barnet	2,400	49.84	2,800	52.92
Cities of London and Westminster	2,900	61.72	3,500	63.16
Croydon Central	3,500	49.49	3,800	50.94
Croydon North	4,300	58.31	4,700	57.91
Croydon South	2,300	45.94	2,500	48.99
Dagenham	4,000	49.49	4,800	49.08
Dulwich and West Norwood	3,000	50.91	3,600	55.80
Ealing North	3,300	71.12	4,100	67.40
Ealing Southall	4,600	71.45	5,100	69.92
Ealing, Acton and Shepherd's Bush	4,300	62.72	4,900	61.86
East Ham	4,400	71.01	5,100	74.24
Edmonton	4,300	55.34	4,600	53.68
Eltham	2,900	48.59	3,500	47.58
Enfield North	3,200	57.02	3,900	54.20
Enfield, Southgate	2,700	61.66	3,400	58.06
Erith and Thamesmead	2,900	51.39	3,700	50.44
Feltham and Heston	3,900	60.97	4,400	59.12
Finchley and Golders Green	3,800	60.70	4,000	60.69
Greenwich and Woolwich	3,500	50.54	4,100	49.89
Hackney North and Stoke Newington	4,800	69.04	5,100	70.78
Hackney South and Shoreditch	4,600	73.51	5,000	68.68
Hammersmith and Fulham	3,500	62.86	3,900	66.14
Hampstead and Highgate	3,300	62.18	3,900	59.81
Harrow East	4,200	69.63	4,800	68.22
Harrow West	2,800	72.49	3,300	67.13
Hayes and Harlington	2,400	60.03	2,900	56.88
Hendon	3,300	61.96	3,900	63.25
Holborn and St Pancras	4,300	63.06	4,800	64.04
Hornchurch	2,200	39.50	2,600	37.47
Hornsey and Wood Green	3,700	62.71	4,300	62.67
Ilford North	3,000	55.75	3,500	59.94
Ilford South	3,200	69.05	3,800	64.37
Islington North	4,500	63.87	5,000	61.31
Islington South and Finsbury	3,900	57.46	4,400	54.93
Kensington and Chelsea	2,900	53.41	3,200	51.69
Kingston and Surbiton	2,800	53.66	3,300	52.04
Lewisham East	3,200	53.16	3,500	52.16
Lewisham West	2,900	44.99	3,400	41.35

The number of pension credit recipients and average award within the parliamentary constituencies contained within the London Government office region as at February 2004 and 2005

	February 2004		February 2005	
	Number	Amount (£)	Number	Amount (£)
Lewisham, Deptford	3,300	62.00	3,700	60.33
Leyton and Wanstead	3,200	55.46	3,800	53.48
Mitcham and Morden	3,000	55.02	3,500	50.61
North Southwark and Bermondsey	4,200	59.16	5,200	57.43
Old Bexley and Sidcup	2,200	43.62	2,900	40.07
Orpington	2,500	41.93	3,100	41.07
Poplar and Canning Town	5,400	70.12	5,900	66.45
Putney	2,300	52.85	2,800	51.22
Regent's Park and Kensington North	5,600	72.12	6,500	71.63
Richmond Park	2,500	51.51	2,800	49.09
Romford	2,300	45.61	2,700	41.60
Ruislip—Northwood	1,900	45.50	2,200	41.44
Streatham	3,700	66.28	4,400	63.12
Sutton and Cheam	2,300	44.12	2,800	38.37
Tooting	2,900	57.55	3,400	57.99
Tottenham	4,800	70.19	5,300	68.04
Twickenham	2,000	45.39	2,500	39.93
Upminster	2,800	40.16	3,300	38.62
Uxbridge	2,300	53.04	2,800	49.35
Vauxhall	4,100	61.74	4,900	58.95
Walthamstow	3,900	59.67	4,200	58.41
West Ham	4,300	65.36	4,800	65.39
Wimbledon	1,800	52.85	2,300	51.21
Total recipients/average award	248,600	59.23	286,800	57.61

Notes:

1. Figures are taken from five per cent samples and are therefore subject to sampling variation.
2. Caseloads are rounded to the nearest 100.
3. Parliamentary Constituencies and Government Office Regions are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant Office for National Statistics postcode directory.
4. The state pension data are taken as at 30 September for the relevant years.
5. The pension credit data are taken as at 29 February 2004 and 28 February 2005.
6. Pension credit replaced the minimum income guarantee on 6 October 2003.

Source:

Information Directorate, 5 per cent. samples

Pensions Ombudsman

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the pensions ombudsman's budget for the 2005–06 financial year is. [17577]

Mr. Timms: The pensions ombudsman's allocation for 2005–06 is £2.120 million. This includes both staff and non-staff costs.

TREASURY

Bank Notes (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many bank notes of each denomination from each bank in Northern Ireland were in circulation in the last period for which figures are available. [19565]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Under the Bankers (Northern Ireland) Acts 1845 and 1928, commercials banks in Northern Ireland who are permitted to issue their own banknotes, are only required to provide information to the Commissioners for Revenue and Customs on the

value of their notes in circulation as at close of business on each Saturday and according to denominations of (i) under £5 and (ii) £5 and above.

The following table provides the latest information available on the average value of notes in circulation as at close of business on each Saturday in the four weeks ending Saturday 13 August 2005. The Commissioners, as required by the Act, published this information in the Belfast Gazette on Friday 14 October 2005.

£

Issuing bank	Denomination £5 and upwards	Under £5	Total
Bank of Ireland	536,003,736	278,105	536,281,841
First Trust Bank	298,255,250	0	298,255,250
National Bank	41,835	19,672	61,507
Northern Bank	216,676,860	444,248	217,121,108
Ulster Bank	332,265,166	76,963	1332,342,129

Child Trust Fund Vouchers

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many Child Trust Fund vouchers had been issued up to 30 September; how many of these have been cashed; and if he will make a statement. [19539]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Information on the number of Child Trust Fund vouchers issued and the number of accounts opened is published quarterly on the HMRC website (http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/child_trust_funds/child-trust- funds.htm). The latest set of figures was published on 31 August.

Customs and Excise (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many specialist detector dogs are in use by Customs and Excise in Northern Ireland; and what they are specifically used to detect. [19573]

Dawn Primarolo: Detector dog teams based at Manchester and Hull provide support to Northern Ireland. Customs confirm that since April 2004, there have been 14 deployment exercises to Northern Ireland. Most deployments consist of two dogs, able to detect drugs and cash. Two of the deployments were for drugs and tobacco.

Drug/Alcohol Deaths

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many deaths of people aged *(a)* under 18 and *(b)* over 18 years in (i) London and (ii) each London borough there have been where the use of (A) heroin/ morphine, (B) ecstasy, (C) amphetamines, (D) other substances and (E) alcohol was recorded as the cause in each year since 1997. [18650]

John Healey: The information requested falls with the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Paul Burstow, dated 19 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many deaths of people *(a)* under 18 and *(b)* over 18 years in (i) London and (ii) each London borough where the use of (A) heroin/morphine, (B) ecstasy, (C) amphetamines, (D) other misuse of substances and (E) alcohol was recorded as the cause there have been in each year since 1997. (18650)

Relevant figures are only readily available for deaths where the underlying cause was either related to drug poisoning or directly related to alcohol (alcohol abuse, dependence and poisoning, and diseases directly related to alcohol use, such as chronic liver disease and cirrhosis). It is not possible to identify from death certificates which substance was the primary cause when more than one was involved.

There were three deaths from chronic liver disease and cirrhosis among those aged under 18 in Greater London in the period 1997 to 2004, and none from other causes linked to alcohol using the ONS definition. Examination of the certificates suggests that these three deaths were not in fact alcohol-related.

There were 14 deaths involving drug misuse among residents of Greater London aged under 18 in the period 1997 to 2003, with fewer than five deaths in each of the categories requested (heroin/ morphine, ecstasy, and amphetamines). In order to maintain confidentiality of information supplied to ONS by coroners for statistical purposes only, precise numbers cannot be provided for this age group.

For alcohol-related deaths, figures for those aged 18 and over are provided in Table 1 below by individual year of registration of death. For drug-related poisoning deaths, figures for those aged 18 and over are provided in Table 2. For reasons of confidentiality, these drug-related poisoning data, have been provided for rolling five-year periods and figures have been suppressed where necessary.

It should be noted that:

The figures for alcohol-related deaths include the long-term effects of alcohol use. Such as cirrhosis of the liver, whereas the figures for drugs all relate to poisoning from drug use.

Deaths from poisoning which involved both drugs and alcohol are coded as being due to drug poisoning, in accordance with international rules for coding cause of death.

The figures on alcohol include only those where the underlying cause was alcohol related. The figures on specific drugs include any mention of the substance where the death was related to drug poisoning.

The figures on alcohol are for deaths registered in the calendar year and are based on the original underlying cause of death. The figures on drugs are for deaths occurring in the calendar year and are based on the final underlying cause of death and confidential additional information supplied by coroners to ONS.

For these reasons the figures provided for drug-related poisoning and alcohol-related deaths are not comparable.

Table 1: Alcohol-related deaths[1] to usual residents of London boroughs aged 18 and over, deaths occurring 1997–2001, 1998–2002, and 1999–2003

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
(i) Greater London	746	787	829	805	809	838	834	772
(ii) Borough								
City of London	0	0	1	1	0	1	2	0
Barking and Dagenham	12	16	23	14	18	19	17	15
Barnet	19	18	17	22	29	23	32	18
Bexley	16	22	20	26	25	27	27	17
Brent	33	40	40	32	30	40	25	33

Table 1: Alcohol-related deaths[1] to usual residents of London boroughs aged 18 and over, deaths occurring 1997–2001, 1998–2002, and 1999–2003

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Bromley	21	24	24	30	27	26	21	29
Camden	40	37	41	28	44	35	27	27
Croydon	32	30	43	34	33	26	43	23
Ealing	32	28	34	31	37	38	44	39
Enfield	17	19	25	22	13	21	28	26
Greenwich	20	29	31	32	29	25	25	26
Hackney	13	21	27	16	19	21	25	29
Hammersmith and Fulham	20	30	23	25	26	24	25	35
Haringey	27	13	23	23	21	20	19	25
Harrow	23	20	20	13	14	17	16	22
Havering	17	13	14	9	14	24	19	18
Hillingdon	34	25	23	16	26	27	30	43
Hounslow	18	38	29	31	29	32	46	28
Islington	25	36	22	25	32	26	22	13
Kensington and Chelsea	16	16	20	28	16	21	14	13
Kingston upon Thames	11	18	18	13	24	19	16	13
Lambeth	33	41	35	40	32	28	34	33
Lewisham	32	28	30	24	29	41	32	32
Merton	18	23	18	22	19	22	21	13
Newham	28	19	33	29	28	33	32	36
Redbridge	27	19	24	26	16	24	16	21
Richmond upon Thames	16	17	19	17	15	29	29	23
Southwark	35	28	28	37	40	31	35	28
Sutton	11	10	21	18	10	17	9	12
Tower Hamlets	23	22	27	30	18	25	26	20
Waltham Forest	15	21	12	21	21	18	19	16
Wandsworth	28	29	31	32	41	24	30	21
Westminster	34	37	33	38	34	32	28	25

[1] For the years 1997–2000 the cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes 291, 303, 305.0, 425.5, 571, E860. For the years from 2001 onwards the cause of deaths was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes F10, 142.6, K70, K73, K74, X45.
Deaths were selected using the original underlying cause.
The selection of codes to define alcohol-related deaths is described in:
Baker A. and Rooney C. (2003). Recent trends in alcohol-related mortality, and the impact of ICD-10 on the monitoring of these deaths in England and Wales, "Health Statistics Quarterly" 17. pp 5–14.

Table 2: Deaths from drug-related poisoning[1] involving selected drugs,[2] to usual residents of London boroughs aged 18 and over, deaths occurring 1997–2001,1998–2002, and 1999–2003

	(A) Heroin/morphine			(B) Ecstasy			(C) Amphetamines		
	1997–2001	1998–2002	1999–2003	1997–2001	1998–2002	1999–2003	1997–2001	1998–2002	1999–2003
(i) Greater London	367	347	321	28	32	32	40	45	42
(ii) Borough									
City of London	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Barking and Dagenham	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Barnet	16	18	16	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Bexley	6	5	5	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Brent	11	13	10	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Bromley	7	7	6	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Camden	15	15	15	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Croydon	6	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Ealing	13	11	8	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Enfield	8	7	9	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Greenwich	21	20	18	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Hackney	8	6	8	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Hammersmith and Fulham	19	17	18	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	5
Haringey	20	19	19	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Harrow	6	6	4	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Havering	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Hillingdon	15	12	13	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Hounslow	6	9	10	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Islington	14	10	9	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Kensington and Chelsea	6	6	7	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Kingston upon Thames	6	7	6	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Lambeth	44	40	33	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Lewisham	20	18	12	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Merton	6	6	6	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__
Newham	12	12	12	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__	[3]__

Table 2: Deaths from drug-related poisoning[1] involving selected drugs,[2] to usual residents of London boroughs aged 18 and over, deaths occurring 1997–2001, 1998–2002, and 1999–2003

	(A) Heroin/morphine			(B) Ecstasy			(C) Amphetamines		
	1997–2001	1998–2002	1999–2003	1997–2001	1998–2002	1999–2003	1997–2001	1998–2002	1999–2003
Redbridge	5	6	6	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]
Richmond upon Thames	9	9	8	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]
Southwark	11	10	10	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]
Sutton	8	9	10	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]
Tower Hamlets	11	13	11	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]
Waltham Forest	12	8	7	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]
Wandsworth	13	11	8	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]
Westminster	5	7	8	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]

	(D) Other misuse[3]			Total misuse deaths[4]		
	1997–2001	1998–2002	1999–2003	1997–2001	1998–2002	1999–2003
(i) Greater London	957	877	756	1,362	1,268	1,118
(ii) Borough						
City of London	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]
Barking and Dagenham	9	8	7	15	12	10
Barnet	23	25	24	40	43	40
Bexley	12	14	14	19	20	20
Brent	27	20	13	39	33	23
Bromley	20	23	22	29	32	29
Camden	108	99	79	124	115	94
Croydon	18	19	17	27	27	26
Ealing	16	17	14	30	30	23
Enfield	22	21	25	31	29	34
Greenwich	23	21	23	46	43	43
Hackney	38	33	26	48	42	37
Hammersmith and Fulham	49	39	36	70	59	58
Haringey	25	24	23	47	46	44
Harrow	15	10	6	24	19	14
Havering	[5]	[5]	[5]	8	7	8
Hillingdon	14	14	16	32	29	31
Hounslow	15	14	12	21	24	23
Islington	48	49	43	63	59	52
Kensington and Chelsea	41	38	34	50	47	43
Kingston upon Thames	18	18	13	24	25	19
Lambeth	71	69	64	117	111	100
Lewisham	32	33	26	53	53	39
Merton	25	19	18	31	25	24
Newham	18	14	8	30	26	20
Redbridge	18	14	13	23	20	19
Richmond upon Thames	16	14	12	27	26	23
Southwark	61	58	52	73	69	62
Sutton	6	5	6	14	15	17
Tower Hamlets	29	25	24	42	39	37
Waltham Forest	23	18	13	37	27	22
Wandsworth	33	28	18	46	39	26
Westminster	76	69	49	82	77	58

[1] Cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases. Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes 292, 304, 305.2–305.9, E850-E858, E950.5, E962.0 and E980.0-E980.5 for 1997 to 2000, and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes F11-F16, F18-F19, X40-X44, X60-X64, X85 and 10-Y14 from 2001 onwards.

[2] Drugs mentioned on the death certificate of a death where the underlying cause was drug poisoning.

[3] Drug misuse deaths where heroin/morphine and amphetamines not mentioned.

[4] As some deaths may be counted in more than one drug column, the numbers cannot be added together to give total misuse deaths.

[5] Data suppressed due to confidentiality considerations.

London (Population)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on what basis the level of provision for doubtful debt relating to tax credit overpayments as reported in the Department of Inland Revenue 2004–05 Accounts was determined; whether the provision is calculated on a *(a)* specific and *(b)* general basis; and if he will make a statement. [19179]

Dawn Primarolo: The provision for doubtful debt relating to tax credits is a general provision, not a specific provision made in respect of itemised debts. The provision represents a prudent estimate of tax credit debt that might be written off in future and has been calculated taking into account the experience of recovery to date.

Mutual Societies

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the role of mutual societies in the UK economy. [19237]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Government welcome the contribution made by mutual societies, in competition with other providers, in providing for greater choice and diversity in the economy. For example, where credit unions serve members in particularly deprived areas, they can be vital in targeting the poorest communities and connecting people to more mainstream financial opportunities. On a larger scale, the 63 building societies in the UK have total assets approaching £250 billion and service around 18 per cent. of the mortgage market.

National Insurance

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost of reducing the lower earnings limit by *(a)* £2, *(b)* £5, *(c)* £10, *(d)* £15, *(e)* £20, *(f)* £30 and *(g)* £3; and how many (i) men and (ii) women would start paying national insurance contributions as a result of each such reduction. [18645]

Dawn Primarolo: The main effect of reducing the LEL on contribution income will be on contracted-out rebates. Class 1 contributions are not paid on earnings below the primary threshold. The total effect on contribution income in 2006–07 is shown in the table.

Table 1: The effect on the national insurance fund if the LEL is reduced by stated amounts in 2006–07[1]

Reduce LEL per week by:	*2006–07 (£ million)*
£2	-70
£3	-110
£5	-180
£10	-360
£15	-540
£20	-720
£30	-1,080

[1] Figures are for UK accruals and are in cash in terms

The effect on benefit payments would not start for at least a year after the change in the LEL (because of the form of the contributions conditions) and would build-up very slowly. Table 2 shows the cost for the first five years, assuming that the change in the LEL took place in April 2006.

Table 2: The cost of extra benefit payments if the LEL is reduced by stated amounts in 2006–07

£ million

Reduce LEL per week by:	*2006–07*	*2007–08*	*2008–09*	*2009–10*	*2010–11*
£2	0	0	0	10	20
£3	0	0	10	20	20
£5	0	0	10	30	40
£10	0	0	20	50	80
£15	0	0	30	80	110
£20	0	0	40	100	150
£30	0	0	60	160	230

[1] Figures are for UK accruals and are in cash terms

The costs will continue to grow in the future as the extra entitlement to retirement pension (both basic and S2P) builds-up.

The extra number of jobs entitled to benefit is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: The extra number of jobs entitled to benefit if the LEL is reduced by stated amounts in 2006–07[1]

Thousand

Reduce LEL per week by:	*Males*	*Females*
£2	20	60
£3	30	90
£5	40	140
£10	90	280
£15	140	390
£20	180	500
£30	260	730

[1] Figures are for UK

Note:

Some of the above will be second jobs, whose occupants are already entitled to benefit from their main job.

Online Tax Collection

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he expects the April 2006 deadline for online tax collection for sub-contractors to be met; what arrangements are being made to assist operators who are unable to work the new system; and if he will make a statement. [17663]

John Healey: Reform of the Construction Industry Scheme (CIS) was announced in Budget 2003 and legislated in the Finance Act 2004. From the outset, the changes have been developed in close consultation with industry representatives, in particular through the work of the Construction Industry Reform Implementation Panel, which met again today.

The industry has agreed to strengthen cooperation with HM Revenue and Customs including in planning a full joint testing programme for the new verification services and monthly contractors' returns, promoting the use of the new employment status declaration and analysing areas of non-compliance in the industry. And the Government have also agreed with the industry to extend from April 2006 to April 2007 the period for implementation of the final elements of the new CIS.

During this period, HMRC will step up its level of advice and compliance activity with the industry, including new interactive online software and up to 70 telephone advisers to provide help with employment status from next month.

Private Pensions

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number and percentage of people living in London who have a private pension. [16911]

Mr. Timms: I have been asked to reply.

In 2003–04 the number of people contributing to a private pension in London is estimated to be 1.7 million. This represents 38 percent. of the working age population.

In addition, 0.7 million people in London are estimated to be in receipt of a private pension.

Notes:

1. All figures are estimates and are taken from the Family Resources Survey (FRS). 2003–04 is the latest year for which data is available.

2. Members who are 'contributing' to a private pension scheme include those who are building up rights within a salary related scheme, those who are currently contributing to a scheme or whose employer makes a contribution on their behalf. Private pension refers to either an occupational, personal or stakeholder pension scheme.

3. Those individuals who contribute to both occupational and personal pension schemes are only counted once in the final figure.

4. For those who are in receipt of a private pension, this includes payments received from occupational and personal pension schemes, widow's employee pensions, trade union and friendly society pensions, annuity pensions, trusts and covenants.

Source: Family Resources Survey 2003–04.

Proceeds of Crime Act

Mr. Randall: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what amounts have been recovered by *(a)* HM Revenue and Customs, *(b)* the Metropolitan police and *(c)* other relevant agencies under the provisions of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 at Heathrow airport or as a result of crime committed at Heathrow airport since the Act came into force. [19431]

Dawn Primarolo: The recovery of criminal proceeds by the police or other agencies is a matter for my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary or other Ministers as appropriate.

The total amount recovered under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 in connection with activity by HM Revenue and Customs at Heathrow airport is £4,259,000.

Search-and-rescue Organisations

David Mundell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will allow search-and-rescue organisations an annual grant to offset irrecoverable VAT payments made during the previous year. [19479]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: As part of the wide range of VAT reliefs for charities, charities providing rescue or first aid services can purchase VAT free the specialised telecommunications, aural, visual, light enhancing or heat detecting equipment which they use. These charities are also able to buy medicines, medical equipment, and ambulances free of VAT. In addition, charities like the RNLI which provide rescue or assistance at sea, do not pay VAT on the purchase of lifeboats and certain related equipment, or on the costs of having these lifeboats repaired or maintained. However, agreements with our European partners mean that it is not now possible to extend the scope of the zero rates available to charities.

No Government have considered the issue of irrecoverable VAT more seriously than this one. We have conducted two major reviews to see if we could find an efficient, affordable and principled solution.

Through these reviews, we came to two conclusions: first, that it would not be an affordable or efficient use of public resources to reimburse all 250,000 charitable bodies in the UK for the VAT they incur, regardless of the activities they are involved in or their financial health, and which, according to estimates from the charitable sector, would cost over £500 million per year; and second, that there was no fair and principled basis on which we could decide that some charities would be reimbursed their VAT and some would not.

As a result of Gift Aid and other measures, we are currently providing nearly £2.5 billion worth of support to charities through the tax system each year, including over £200 million in VAT reliefs. This forms part of the total Government support for the voluntary and community sector, which stands at over £3.3 billion per year.

Tax (Late Payment Fines)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much was raised from fines imposed by *(a)* Her Majesty's Customs and Excise and *(b)* the Inland Revenue for (i) late completion of tax forms and (ii) late payment of tax owed in the last five financial years. [19584]

Dawn Primarolo: Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs charge interest, penalties and surcharge for the following purposes;

Interest is charged to provide restitution to Government for taxes paid late and to cancel the immediate financial advantage for those who pay taxes late over those who pay on time.

Surcharge is used to encourage prompt payment and 'stepped' rules for calculating surcharge have been designed to increase the incentive to pay liabilities that are late.

Penalties are intended to encourage customers to submit returns by the due date.

Indirect Taxes (VAT)

Revenue received from penalties for late submission/ payment of VAT returns.

Year ending	*Surcharge paid for late payment of VAT (£ millions)*
March 01	87
March 02	76
March 03	90
March 04	99
March 05	99

Direct Taxes

The former Inland Revenue accounting year runs till the end of October and revenue raised from interest, penalties and surcharge are shown in the following table.

Year ending	*Interest paid for late payment of direct taxes (£ millions)*
October 2000	351.89
October 2001	420.76
October 2002	389.52
October 2003	406.49
October 2004	400.77

Year ending	*Surcharges paid for late payment of direct taxes (£ millions)*
October 2000	50.84
October 2001	59.34
October 2002	67.51
October 2003	66.80
October 2004	62.49

Year ending	Penalties paid for late submissions of returns (£ millions)
October 2000	64.57
October 2001	74.26
October 2002	81.63
October 2003	89.89
October 2004	86.59

Tax Credits

Mr. Bailey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will introduce tax credits for self-employed low earners; [15744]

(2) what tax provisions are available to help self-employed low earners. [15745]

Dawn Primarolo: Working tax credit and child tax credit are available for both employed and self-employed earners. Both employed and self employed earners may become eligible for working tax credit if they work 16 hours or more a week and so self employed earners on low incomes are already supported by working tax credits.

Help can also be provided with the costs of child care for those workers in receipt of working tax credit. This can be for up to 70 per cent. of the total child care costs incurred to a maximum of £175 a week for one child and £300 a week for two or more children.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate of the cost of tax credit overpayments in 2004–05 has been given to the National Audit Office; and when the final figure will be available. [19291]

Dawn Primarolo: In order to produce the provision for irrecoverable debt estimates for the Trust Statement, which UK accounting standards require us to make, HM Revenue and Customs needed to make an assessment of 2004–05 overpayments. As there was no information or data on which to make such an assessment, it was decided to use a stylised and prudent assumption, reproducing the same figure from 2003–04.

Estimates of level of 2004–05 overpayments as at 5 April 2005 will be published as National Statistics in spring 2006.

VAT

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much Customs and Excise collected in VAT revenue during the last financial year for which figures are available. [16396]

Dawn Primarolo: The total amount of VAT revenue received in the last financial year was:

2004–05—£73,058 million

Information on revenue from VAT can be found in the HM Revenue and Customs 'Annual Report', which will be published on the HM Revenue and Customs website at the end of this month.

HEALTH

Childhood Leukaemia

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment she has made of the link between childhood leukaemia and overhead power lines. [18728]

Caroline Flint: The Department's radiation protection research programme supports a number of studies investigating the possible health effects of electromagnetic fields (EMF). A study by Dr. Draper and colleagues on childhood leukaemia and distance from power lines, recently published in the British Medical Journal (BMJ) and funded under this programme, has added to a large existing body of work in this area (BMJ Vol 330, 4 June 2005).

The Health Protection Agency's radiation protection division (HPA-RPD) keeps the world-wide research findings on EMF continually under review. In 2004, on the basis of a comprehensive review of the existing body of research to date, the HPA-RPD (previously the National Radiological Protection Board) recommended the adoption of new EMF exposure guidelines in this country. In addition, in view of the scientific uncertainties, the HPA recommended the Government "consider the need for further precautionary measures" in relation to power frequency electromagnetic fields. They have also noted that the majority of elevated magnetic fields are due to variations in the electricity supply and distribution system, the presence of substations and equipment in the home rather than proximity to power lines.

Practical precautionary measures are now being considered in detail by a stakeholder advisory group that includes the Government Departments, agencies, electricity industry, specialists and public concern groups. Details of the process can be found on the website at: www.rkpartnership.co.uk/sage

Teenage Pregnancies

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made towards achieving targets for the reduction of conception by women under the age of 18 years. [18826]

Beverley Hughes: I have been asked to reply.

Between 1998 (the baseline year for the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy) and 2003 (the latest year for which data are available) the under-18 conception rate in England has fallen by 9.8 per cent. The under-16 rate has fallen by 9.9 per cent. over the same period.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Autism

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which of the Department's Priorities for Action for 2005 involve autism. [18427]

Mr. Woodward: The Department's priorities for 2005–06 onwards have been conveyed to Boards and Trusts, and they are working together to achieve the

associated targets and actions. The priorities require that Boards and Trusts develop strategies to address waiting lists for patients requiring therapy services, which includes autism, and should develop support services for Asperger's Syndrome, a specific form of autism. The Department is monitoring their progress towards these goals

Breast Cancer

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many breast cancer patients in Northern Ireland are being treated with Herceptin. [18907]

Mr. Woodward: There are currently 80 breast cancer patients being treated with Herceptin in Northern Ireland.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the availability of the breast cancer treatment drug Herceptin in Northern Ireland; and what plans he has to increase its availability, with particular reference to newly diagnosed breast cancer patients. [18908]

Mr. Woodward: Herceptin is available to every breast cancer patient in NI, who is judged by their oncologist to have a clinical need for the drug in the advanced disease setting. It is not currently licensed for use in the treatment of early stage breast cancer.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health has said that as soon as Herceptin has been licensed for use by those patients with early stage breast cancer suitable for treatment it will be fast-tracked by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) in relation to its availability throughout the NHS. NICE guidance does not automatically apply in Northern Ireland. However, the quality of its advice is well recognised and the HPSS will normally take it into account when deciding on its priorities for the future funding of new drugs.

CCTV

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what plans he has to increase the CCTV coverage in East Belfast; [18101]

(2) what criteria are used by Government when choosing sites for CCTV cameras. [18102]

Mr. Woodward: CCTV coverage and positioning are police operational matters. Questions on how CCTV resources are allocated are essentially matters for the Chief Constable in response to policing priorities.

Departmental Computer Fraud/Theft

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many cases of computer *(a)* hacking, *(b)* fraud and *(c)* theft his Department recorded in each year since 2001; and how many times computers have been illegally accessed by computer hackers (i) within and (ii) outside his Department. [19587]

Mr. Woodward: The following table refers to the Northern Ireland Office and does not include figures for the 11 departments of the Northern Ireland Administration.

Number of cases

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
(a) Computer hacking	2	0	0	0
(b) Computer fraud	0	0	0	0
(c) Computer theft	1	2	0	2
(i) Illegal accesses by computer hackers within his Department	1	0	0	0
(ii) Illegal accesses by computer hackers outside his Department	1	0	0	0

Domestic Rates

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the projected revenue to be raised from domestic rates in Northern Ireland is forecast to be in 2006–07. [17503]

Angela E. Smith: Domestic rates consists of two elements, the regional rate, set by the Secretary of State on a uniform basis across Northern Ireland, and the district rate, set separately by each district council relevant to the location of the property.

For 2006–07, the current forecast revenue from the regional domestic rate, on the basis of the levels announced by the Secretary of State in December 2004, is £229.8 million. Regional rate levels are reviewed annually and any proposed adjustments are announced by the Secretary of State before the start of the relevant financial year.

Revenue from the district rate is a matter for individual district councils.

Drugs

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much cash has been seized from operations against drug dealing in Northern Ireland since 2000. [18233]

Mr. Woodward: Officers from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs have seized cash totalling £59,280 in operations against drug dealing in Northern Ireland since 2000. The amount of criminal assets restrained or confiscated by the Police Service of Northern Ireland runs into millions of pounds annually however information relating to cash seized during operations against drug dealing is not readily available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Since its inception in 2003 the Assets Recovery Agency has frozen some £4 million from individuals where the primary criminality was believed by the agency to be drugs related. So far houses, cars and other property to the value of just under £1 million have been handed over to the agency for disposal.

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what amount of drugs has been seized by the Police Service of Northern Ireland in each of the last three years. [18234]

Mr. Woodward: The quantity of drugs seized and the number of seizures made by the Police Service of Northern Ireland from 1 April 2002 to 30 September 2005 are detailed in the following tables.

Drugs seized	2002–03 Number of seizures	2002–03 Amount seized	2003–04 Number of seizures	2003–04 Amount seized	2004–05 Number of seizures	2004–05 Amount seized
Class A						
Cocaine:						
Powder (gms)	44	3,023.9	77	11,470.9	87	21,331.6
Wraps	3	12	2	6	3	24
'Crack' (gms)	1	50.0	3	9.2	0	0.0
Ecstasy:						
Tablets	258	605,188	342	222,888	317	351,296
Powder (gms)	2	1.1	9	72.1	6	43.41
Capsules	5	25	1	20	2	4
LSD:						
Doses	1	4	0	0	7	1,134
Microdots	2	1	1	6	2	7,012
Opiates:						
Powder (gms)	21	346	14	189.9	14	5.1
Tablets	1	41	1	3	5	57
Ampoules	1	1	1	20	0	0
Mls	14	428.5	13	163.6	5	202.2
Wraps	1	1	2	2	0	0
All Class A1	335	—	431	—	429	—
Class B						
Amphetamine:						
Powder (kgs)	83	27.6	130	17.3	147	79.1
Wraps	9	24	9	35	3	24
Tablets	4	11	2	58	1	32
Barbiturates:						
Tablets	0	0	0	0	0	0
All Class B1	[2]1,534	—	[2]1,703	—	[2]151	—
Class C (Cannabis)3						
Cannabis[3]:						
Resin (kgs)	1,366	709.5	1,819	2,204.2	1,841	933.0
Herbal (kgs)	78	27.7	109	32.8	131	19.7
Plants	29	202	59	1,173	43	574
Oil (gms)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Joints	104	169	138	212	132	208
All Cannabis1	1,487	—	1,984	—	2,021	—

[1] As seizure incidents can involve more than one drug type, seizure figures for individual drugs cannot be added together to produce totals.

[2] Cannabis was reclassified from Class B to Class C on 29 January 2004, as such Class B totals include cannabis seizure incidents prior to reclassification.

[3] For presentation purposes, total seizures of Cannabis are presented together regardless of class.

1 April 2005–30 September 2005

Drugs seized	Number of seizures	Amount seized
Class A		
Cocaine:		
Powder (gms)	75	15,950.19
Wraps	3	4
'Crack"(gms)	2	1.01
Ecstasy:		
Tablets	105	7,758
Powder (gms)	3	9.10
Capsules	1	10
LSD:		
Doses	10	205
Microdots	1	2
Opiates:		
Powder (gms)	15	198.02
Tablets	1	1
Ampoules	0	0
Mls	8	72.14
Wraps	0	0
Class B		
Amphetamine:		
Powder (gms)	55	57,994.97
Wraps	4	9
Tablets	2	155
Class C		
Cannabis:		
Resin (gms)	979	301,366.92
Herbal (gms)	67	64,600.27
Plants	14	612
Oil (gms)	0	0.00
Joints	78	99

Education and Library Boards

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many occurrences there have been in the last six months of Education and Library Boards reinstating services outside their agreed financial schemes, broken down by *(a)* date and *(b)* type of service. [19538]

Angela E. Smith: There have not been any occurrences in the last 6 months of Education and Library Boards reinstating services outside their agreed financial schemes (now known as resource allocation plans).

Employment

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the Equality Commission intends to publish the latest monitoring report into employment patterns in Northern Ireland. [18496]

Angela E. Smith: The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland anticipates publishing the 'Fair Employment Monitoring Report No 15—A Profile of the Northern Ireland Workforce' by the beginning of December.

Equality Commission

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many complaints have been made against the Equality Commission in each of the last three years. [18055]

Angela E. Smith: There have been 10 complaints made against the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in the last three years. Four complaints were made in 2003; four complaints were made in 2004; and two complaints have been made in 2005.

Freedom of Information

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many individuals in each Government Department in the Province are employed to deal with freedom of information requests. [18430]

Angela E. Smith: It is not possible to identify precisely the number of officials who deal with freedom of information issues, since it is potentially part of every civil servant's role to respond to Freedom of Information requests. However, one of the primary support functions of Information Management staff is to deal with these requests, plus requests made under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. The number of Information Management staff who help to process requests within each Department is cited in the following table.

Department	*Information Management (including FOI) staff*
Northern Ireland Office	2.5
Department of Environment	6
Department for Regional Development	5
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	[1]8.5
Department of Education	4
Department for Social Development	3
Department for Employment and Learning	4
Department of Finance and Personnel	4
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	6
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment	2
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	4
Office of the First and Deputy First Minister	[2]5

[1] This figure includes 5.5 people processing requests in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.
[2] This figure includes 2 people from the central FOI team.

Frozen Assets

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the organisations whose assets have been frozen in Northern Ireland due to links with terrorism in each of the last 10 years. [18149]

Mr. Woodward: Law enforcement agencies have fully utilised proceeds of crime powers to freeze assets from individuals. Assets totalling nearly £12 million were restrained or confiscated by law enforcement agencies in 2004–05. These actions were taken against individuals.

Records indicate that no organisations have had their assets frozen due to links with terrorism in the last 10 years.

Grant Maintained Independent Schools

Mr. David Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to allocate funds to grant maintained integrated schools to employ staff in order to implement the Costello review of post primary education; and if he will make a statement. [19344]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of Education has allocated additional funds to the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education to enable it to support and facilitate schools in the integrated sector in beginning to develop collaborative arrangements with other schools and with FE colleges to provide access to the curricular Entitlement Framework, and generally to support work by integrated schools to prepare for the implementation of the new post-primary arrangements.

Additional funds have also been allocated to the education and library boards, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and Comhairle na Gaelscolaí ochta in respect of their school sectors. The Department is in correspondence with the Governing Bodies Association about support for the voluntary grammar school sector.

Hip Replacements

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many hip replacement operations were carried out in each of the last five years. [19557]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the number of hip replacement operations carried out in acute hospitals in Northern Ireland in each year from 2000–01 to 2004–05 (the latest year for which data is available) is shown in the following table.

	Number of hip replacement operations
2004–05	2,385
2003–04	2,166
2002–03	2,092
2001–02	1,976
2000–01	2,051

Hospital Beds

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many hospital beds there were in each health trust in the Province in June 1997. [18185]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the average number of available in-patient beds during the quarter ending June 1997, is shown in the following table. Average available beds are defined as the average number of beds available during the quarter in wards that are open overnight, measured at midnight. Hospitals may also have a number of beds in wards, which are only open during the day. Beds reserved for day case admission or regular day admission are not included.

Average number of available beds in Northern Ireland, quarter ending June 1997

Trust name	*Average available beds*
Altnagelvin Area Hospitals HSS Trust	493.1
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	454.1
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	878.2
Causeway HSS Trust	346.7
Craigavon and Banbridge HSS Trust	80.0
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust	660.8
Down and Lisburn HSS Trust	676.6
Foyle Community HSS Trust	327.0
Greenpark HSS Trust	422.3
Homefirst Community HSS Trust	384.0
Mater Infirmorum HSS Trust	207.8
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	278.4
North and West Belfast HSS Trust	484.0
South and East Belfast HSS Trust	384.0
Sperrin Lakeland HSS Trust	644.1
The Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	928.8
Ulster Community and Hospitals HSS Trust	688.2
United Hospitals HSS Trust	877.4
Northern Ireland	9,215.4

Source:
Hospital Information Branch.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the percentage bed occupancy in each hospital in the Province has been over each of the last 10 years. [18421]

Mr. Woodward: For percentage bed occupancy figures in each hospital for 1994–95 to 2003–04, I refer the hon. Lady to the Hospital Statistics publications for each year 1994–95 to 2003–04. Copies of this publication are available in the Library. Table 1.1, Inpatient Activity Data by Hospital/Provider, contains the relevant information.

Provisional figures for percentage bed occupancy in each hospital in Northern Ireland in 2004–05 are given in the following table. Note that day cases are excluded from the calculation for bed occupancy.

Percentage bed occupancy by hospital for 2004–05[1]

Hospital	*Percentage*
Belfast City	86.6
Belvoir Park NICCO	86.5
Windsor House	99.5
Forest Lodge	73.7
Forster Green	63.2
Musgrave Park	76.0
Knockbracken Health Care Park	86.8
Shaftesbury Square	10.0
Young Peoples Centre	75.5
Ards	93.3
Bangor	88.3
Ulster	89.0
RBHSC	67.9
Royal Maternity	70.9
Royal Victoria	88.6
Mater Infirmorum	90.2
Muckamore Abbey	94.6
Downe	87.8
Downshire	97.0
Lagan Valley	81.9
Lagan Valley P.N.U	100.0
Thompson House	95.0
Causeway	79.4
Dalriada	77.8
Robinson Memorial	79.6
Holywell	93.9
Whiteabbey P.N.U	92.6
Antrim	76.4
Braid Valley	93.8
Mid Ulster	74.5
Moyle	93.5
Whiteabbey	94.4
Longstone	89.4
Mullinure	86.4
Oaklands	63.2
St. Lukes	77.4
Banbridge[2]	0.0
Craigavon Area	79.9
Lurgan	89.1
South Tyrone	92.2
Daisyhill	75.0
Craigavon P.N.U	94.1
Altnagelvin Area	80.8
Waterside	76.7
Gransha	90.4
Roe Valley	89.3
Stradeagh	93.4
Waterside-Foyle	87.4
Erne	66.5
Tyrone and Fermanagh	83.2
Tyrone County	80.5
Northern Ireland	84.2

[1] Provisional
[2] Banbridge hospital only has day cases which are excluded from the calculation for bed occupancy.

Hospital Negligence (Compensation)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much money was claimed in compensation by patients due to *(a)* negligence and *(b)* malpractice in each hospital in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years, broken down by health board. [19569]

Mr. Woodward: The information is not available in the form requested and could only be provided at a disproportionate cost.

Hospital Operations (Cancellations)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average number of operations which have been cancelled in each hospital or trust in Northern Ireland has been in each quarter in the last three years. [19549]

Mr. Woodward: This information is not collected centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Hydebank Wood Centre

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he has taken to implement the recommendations by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission for improving conditions for female prisoners at the Hydebank Wood Centre in Belfast. [18904]

Mr. Woodward: The Prison Service has placed women prisoners' needs centre stage, and has made significant progress against the recommendations made by both the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) and the CJINI/HMCIP Inspection Team in its report on Ash House published in May 2005.
Key developments to date include:

1. *Recognition of the special needs of women in custody, with* gender specific programmes and policies, including policies on:

- The Management of Mothers and Babies
- Suicide and Self Harm
- Child Protection / Public Protection
- Resettlement
- Anti-bullying
- Induction
- First Night
- Drugs and Alcohol
- Foreign Nationals

Policies on these topics will shortly be issued for consultation.

2. *Ash House now has a distinct gender specific identity,* supported by a discrete management structure:

A NIPS female Governor dedicated to the management of female prisoners is now in place.

A female Governor, on secondment from HMPS, was appointed on 20 June to lead the development of the regime for Ash.

The majority (75 per cent.) of staff in the unit are female.

Prisoners have access to women staff at all times.

3. *Child-centred visits are being further developed.* Additional monthly child centred visits are available for life sentenced prisoners. NIPS is exploring the possibility of allowing children to stay overnight with their mother in prison occasionally.

4. *Women prisoners have access to a wider range of education, work and rehabilitative programmes* specifically linked to the skills requirements of women prisoners, which should enhance their prospects of acquiring employment upon release from custody. They also have access to a working out scheme. Specifically:

NIPS conducted a detailed analysis on the re-integration needs of women prisoners. This was published on 7 October and has already resulted in:

the opening of a careers advice surgery, run by NIACRO;

PBNI providing a dedicated re-integration worker before the end of the year to support women before and after release; and

the appointment of a bereavement counsellor early in 2006 with the support of CRUSE.

Courses offered vary from numeracy and literacy to A-level Psychology, and include cookery, music, drama and aromatherapy; CLAIT is also available and NVQ's are due to be available from March 2006.

Five new teachers are being appointed and two new VT Instructors.

5. *All women receive a healthcare screening on committal* to prison and they are offered the opportunity to join a "well women" clinic. There is 24 hour nursing care available and women prisoners have access to a female doctor. A Health Needs assessment of the women in Ash House is scheduled for later this year. Psychologists are currently preparing an in-depth analysis of the offending behaviour needs of women prisoners and the prisoners will be consulted extensively in its development.

6. The Prison Service is committed to gender specific training of the staff working with women prisoners. Training already delivered includes:

Child Awareness

Cultural Diversity

Housing Rights

Management of Aggression

Mental Health Awareness

Mother and Baby

Prisoner Management

Further training will include:

Working with females in custody

Working with vulnerable females in custody

Dealing with Mental Health Issues

Presentation Skills for Induction

Lifer training

Suicide Awareness

Nature of Adolescence

7. *On self-harm and suicide, a new committee has been established* on which prisoners are represented. A buddy scheme has been set up and 24 free telephone access to the Samaritans has been provided. A new self harm policy is being drafted and women who need to be observed can now remain on general association. Two Cognitive Behavioural Therapy nurses were recruited in June from a local Health Trust to work with women prisoners.

8. *Installation of in-cell sanitation has begun* in Beech House and the Service plans for the women prisoners to move there early next year, while facilities are being installed in the cells at Ash House. In the meantime, women have access to lavatories on request.

Notwithstanding these improvements, the Prison Service recognises that Ash House may not be the most suitable long-term option to house women prisoners and alternative accommodation is being considered as part of the Service's on-going strategic development programme. This is designed to map out the way forward for the next 10–15 years. It will also examine the feasibility of housing long term women prisoners separately from short term women prisoners.

In the meantime, the Prison Service will continue to work, in partnership with others in the public, private and voluntary sectors, and with women in custody to improve its performance further. Indeed, the Human Rights Commission has been given access to Ash House—to the facilities and to the women who want to be interviewed—to monitor the current situation independently.

However, this issue is not something for the Prison Service alone. Many agencies and the community as a whole have a role to play in ensuring that support measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of vulnerable women ending up in custody and to cater for the reintegration and resettlement needs of those sent to prison.

Influenza Vaccination

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent steps he has taken to promote the influenza vaccination among Northern Ireland's elderly population. [18909]

Mr. Woodward: The launch of the annual influenza immunisation programme on 3 October attracted a considerable amount of TV and press coverage, and this was followed by an advertising campaign inviting elderly and other at risk patients to "catch the vaccine not the flu". Most GPs will issue personal invitations to their elderly patients to come for the vaccination.

In addition a supply of leaflets about the benefits of immunisation have been distributed to all GP practices, libraries, pharmacies, residential and nursing homes. Translink are involved in the campaign displaying posters, promoting the flu programme, on their vehicles.

Maritime Safety

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many deaths due to drowning on the coasts around Northern Ireland there have been in each of the last 10 years. [18225]

Angela E. Smith: The following table gives the number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland, for each year between 1995 and 2004, due to drownings[1] outside the home. It is not possible to say where these drownings occurred.

[1] International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes V90, W69, W70, W73, W74, X71, X92, and Y21 for years 2001–2004 and Ninth Revision codes E830, E832, E910, E954, E964, and E984 for years 1995–2000.

Number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland due to drownings outside the home, 1995–2004

Registration year	Number of deaths
1995	36
1996	33
1997	36
1998	30
1999	23
2000	18
2001	24
2002	24
2003	25
2004[1]	22

[1] Data for 2004 is provisional.

PPPs

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many public-private partnerships there have been in Northern Ireland over the last five years, broken down by *(a)* Westminster parliamentary constituency and *(b)* district council area. [18018]

Angela E. Smith: The information is set out in the following tables.

(a) By Westminster parliamentary constituency

	Belfast, West	Belfast, South	Foyle	Mid Ulster	Lagan Valley	Fermanagh and South Tyrone	NI wide
2000	[1]3	[1]2	—	—	—	—	—
2001	1	—	—	—	—	—	2
2002	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
2003	—	1	—	1	—	1	2
2004	—	1	—	—	1	—	—
2005	—	—	1	—	—	—	—

[1] Two projects in the education sector relate to the provision of facilities which are each located in two different parliamentary constituencies

(b) By district council area

	Belfast City	Derry City	Omagh	Dungannon	Lisburn	NI wide
2000	3	—	—	—	—	—
2001	1	—	—	—	—	2
2002	—	—	—	—	—	2
2003	1	—	1	1		2
2004	1	—	—	—	1	—
2005	—	1	—	—	—	—

Protected Elective Procedures

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many protected elective procedures have been performed at Lagan Valley and South Tyrone Hospitals in the last year for which figures are available. [17134]

Mr. Woodward: The protected elective unit at Lagan Valley hospital carried out 876 protected elective procedures in the financial year 2004–05. South Tyrone hospital carried out 4,030 protected elective procedures in 2004–05.

PSNI

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many officers there are in the Police Service of Northern Ireland at the rank of *(a)* assistant chief constable, *(b)* chief superintendent, *(c)* superintendent, *(d)* chief inspector, *(e)* sergeant, *(f)* constable and *(g)* reserve constable full-time. [17997]

Mr. Woodward: The actual full-time equivalent strength as at 12 October 2005 are as follows (includes student officers and secondments):

Actual full-time equivalent strength

	Number
Assistant Chief Constable	6
Chief Superintendent	24
Superintendent	76
Chief Inspector	97.5
Inspector	416
Sergeant	1,104.75
Constable	5,723
Full-time Reserve	1,149.75

Retail Planning Policy

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when does he plans to publish the Review of Retail Planning Policy. [18692]

Angela E. Smith: The Minister of State's (Lord Rooker) decision to approve a major retail development at Sprucefield is currently the subject of applications for Judicial Review. He subsequently issued a Press Release on 18 August announcing that he would be monitoring developments in respect of those applications in deciding the timing and content of Draft PPS 5.

Retailing is a very complex area of policy, and it is important to monitor developments in order to produce a robust document.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when did the consultation on the Review of Retail Planning Policy commence. [18693]

Angela E. Smith: The review of Retailing Planning Policy has not yet been the subject of public consultation.

Registered Child Carers

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many registered *(a)* day nurseries, *(b)* childminders, *(c)* playgroups and *(d)* out of school clubs there are in Northern Ireland. [19527]

Mr. Woodward: At 31 March 2004 (the latest date for which such data are available), there were 226 registered day nurseries, 3,950 registered childminders, 608 registered playgroups and 250 registered out of school clubs in Northern Ireland.

Pulmonary Hypertension

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many pulmonary hypertension sufferers in Northern Ireland are receiving treatment which includes use of the drug Cialis. [18437]

Mr. Woodward: Hospital information systems indicate that 215 patients received in-patient treatment for primary pulmonary hypertension in Northern Ireland hospitals during 2004–05. In addition to these, a number of patients with pulmonary hypertension are treated at out-patient clinics and in primary care. Information on the number of these patients is not held centrally, nor is information held regarding the types of treatment or drug therapies which in-patients or out-patients receive.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 20 October 2005

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Disabled Access

Dr. Cable: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what assessments of the facilities and procedures in Parliament have been made in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act 2005; and if he will make a statement. [17850]

Nick Harvey: Improvements in access to the Parliamentary Estate for people with disabilities have been ongoing for many years. A Disability Access Audit Report was produced in April 2004 which set out the then current situation and recommended a continuing programme of improvements. Notable recent projects have included installation of ramps, such as in Star Chamber Court; installation or modification of lifts and the installation of hearing loops in Committee Rooms. There is an ongoing programme of work to improve lifts in and around the Parliamentary Estate to aid access for people with disabilities and access audits have been commissioned for each building comprising the Parliamentary Estate.

Steel Barriers

Mr. Purchase: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what the total cost of the installation of the steel barriers on the roadside of the Palace of Westminster was; what estimate has been made of the annual costs of maintaining these barriers; and what the estimated cost of their removal is. [19251]

Nick Harvey: The cash cost incurred is estimated to be £980,000, to be shared with the House of Lords. Annual maintenance costs are expected to be minimal. Funds have been set aside for a removal contract but these details are yet to be finalised.

Mr. Purchase: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what level of security risk was quantified in the advice that led to the replacement of the concrete blocks outside the Palace of Westminster by a steel barrier; and what the reason was for the extension of the new barrier beyond the perimeter marked out by the former concrete blocks. [19252]

Nick Harvey: This project was approved after full consideration by the Joint Committee on Security, but it is not the practice to provide details of security advice.

CABINET OFFICE

Departmental Vehicles

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many vehicles for which his Office is responsible are fitted with retreaded tyres. [17996]

Mr. Jim Murphy: For information on the use of retreaded or recycled tyres in vehicles provided to the Department by the Government Car and Despatch Agency I refer the hon. Member to the letter of 11 October 2005 which he received from the Chief Executive of the GCDA, reference UIN15087 and UIN15088. Copies of this letter are available in the Library.

In addition the Department owns and operates two Toyota Prius's. These are not fitted with recycled or retreaded tyres.

Linux OpenSource Software

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list those Government Departments and agencies which *(a)* use Linux OpenSource software and *(b)* have licensing and service agreements with Microsoft. [19135]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Cabinet Office and Office of Government Commerce do not hold this information centrally.

It is for individual Departments and agencies to decide which software to purchase, in accordance with the Government's procurement policy of achieving best value for money.

PRIME MINISTER

Departmental Vehicles

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Prime Minister how many vehicles for which his Office is responsible are fitted with retreaded tyres. [17976]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my Office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Hutton) today.

Volunteering

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Prime Minister how many volunteering positions his Office has offered in each of the last five years. [17879]

The Prime Minister: My Office encourages all staff to take part in voluntary and community activities, and offers one day's special leave a year to do so. In addition, staff have, over the last five years, organised specific volunteering activities, including mentoring children in London schools and working with local communities on other projects.

SCOTLAND

Correspondence

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what his Department's policy is for dealing with correspondence received in *(a)* Welsh, *(b)* Scots Gaelic and *(c)* Irish Gaelic. [14697]

David Cairns: When someone writes to, or e-mails, the Scotland Office in Welsh, Scots Gaelic, or Irish Gaelic, we would make every reasonable effort to reply in the corresponding language, as we would with any other language in which the correspondence was written.

Departmental Vehicles

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many vehicles for which the Department is responsible are fitted with retreaded tyres. [17977]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office is not responsible for any vehicles. For information on the use of retread tyres in vehicles provided to the Office by the Government car and despatch agency (GCDA), I refer the hon. Member to the letter of 11 October which he received from the chief executive of the GCDA, reference UIN15087 and UIN15088. Copies of this letter are available in the Library.

Self-invested Personal Pensions

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer regarding the impact on demand for second homes of allowing self-invested personal pensions to be invested in residential property. [19757]

David Cairns: My right hon. Friend has regular discussions with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on a range of issues affecting Scotland.

Statistics (Constituency Boundaries)

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether it is his policy to provide statistics relating to Scottish constituencies in terms of *(a)* Westminster and *(b)* Scottish Parliament boundaries. [15643]

David Cairns: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 313W.

Telephone Inquiries

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what facilities his Department has to deal with telephone inquiries in *(a)* Welsh, *(b)* Scots Gaelic and *(c)* Irish Gaelic. [14698]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office shares the telephone system with the Scottish Executive who maintain a list of translators. In the event of a call in Welsh, Scots Gaelic or Irish Gaelic, the operator would identify an official on the list who could speak the relevant language; that official would liaise with the appropriate colleagues to ensure an answer was given to the caller.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Recycling

15. **Miss Kirkbride:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on levels of recycling in the UK. [19616]

Mr. Bradshaw: Provisional figures from the Municipal Waste Management Survey show that nearly 23 per cent. of household waste was recycled or composted in England in 2004–05, up from 18 per cent. in 2003–04.

An Environment Agency survey shows that 42 per cent. of commercial and industrial waste was recycled or reused in 2002–03.

A survey in 2001 by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister estimated that about 50 per cent. of construction and demolition waste was recycled.

18. **Dr. Cable:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what *(a)* targets and *(b)* incentives exist to encourage the recycling of trade waste by shops and commercial premises. [19619]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government have set a target to reduce the amount of commercial and industrial waste going to landfill to 85 per cent. of the 1998 levels by 2005. Instruments designed to assist in meeting these targets include the Packaging Waste Regulations and the landfill tax escalator.

Avian Influenza

20. **James Brokenshire:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on avian influenza. [19621]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government have taken a number of steps and put in place new arrangements to detect avian influenza and to stop it spreading. We have a well developed contingency plan and controls in place to deal with any outbreak of avian influenza.

We currently assess the risk of AI entering the UK as low. However it is a developing situation and we are monitoring it closely as well as stepping up our work on surveillance , biosecurity and emergency preparedness.

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will publish her contingency plans to be implemented in the event of an outbreak of H5NI virus; what research her Department is funding to assess the pathogenicity of avian influenza; and if she will make a statement. [19230]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA has recently reviewed and updated its contingency plans and, following a period of public consultation, the Exotic Animal Disease Generic Contingency Plan, which includes a section dealing specifically with an outbreak of avian influenza, was laid before Parliament on 21 July 2005. It is also available on the DEFRA website. In the event of an outbreak in GB the plan would be invoked immediately.

DEFRA supports a wide ranging programme of research on avian influenza (AI), costing approximately £460,000 per annum. The research is undertaken at the Veterinary Laboratories Agency which is the European Union reference laboratory for AI.

The current programme of work includes studies to better understand pathogenesis and transmission of the virus. Some of the work is being taken forward to provide basic information about the virus and how it behaves in poultry; infectious dose, dynamics of transmission between birds and the influence of prior immunity are all being studied.

More fundamental studies are also in place to examine the role of viral genetics, that is how changes in the genetic structure of the virus may allow it to adapt to a new species or cause it to become more pathogenic or virulent. Other areas of study include the development of improved diagnostic tests, and work on viral survival better to inform risk assessments for trade and disease control purposes.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department is taking to prevent the spread of avian influenza to the United Kingdom. [19608]

Mr. Bradshaw: We monitor the global situation in respect of outbreaks of notifiable diseases such as avian influenza. When a new outbreak is confirmed we carry out an assessment of the risk to the UK and liaise closely with the European Commission and other member states to decide what action is necessary to protect the UK. We act promptly in line with Community decisions to ban imports of animals and products from countries or parts of countries that represent a risk.

Climate Change

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research the Government have commissioned to ascertain whether recent severe weather conditions have been due to climate change as a result of carbon emissions. [19128]

Mr. Morley: An important part of DEFRA's Climate Prediction Programme at the Hadley Centre is specifically directed towards better understanding of how the frequency and intensity of severe weather events may be changing in response to changes in global climate, as a result of increased concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Recent research by Hadley Centre has shown for example that the European hot summer of 2003 was up to four times more likely to have happened because of the increased levels of greenhouse gases. Studies also suggest that the frequency of droughts and extreme rainfall events may increase overall in response to global warming although there will may well be local and regional variations. The effect of global warming on storminess is less clear but the Hadley Centre has recently published work indicating a significant increase in the number of severe storms over the UK as a whole since the 1950s, which may be at least partly related to global warming.

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the Contraction and Convergence strategy for combating climate change. [19681]

Mr. Morley: Certain aspects of Contraction and Convergence are appealing, including the identification of a fixed level for stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations, and comprehensive global participation. However, one key element of any future regime must be its workability and one particular concern with contraction and convergence is the question of how globally acceptable, and in consequence how workable, it would prove to be.

First, we do not yet see evidence that other key Annex I countries are likely to support this approach. The US has already indicated that it is opposed to a per-capita approach, and as the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions, their inclusion will be vital if we are to solve the problem. Australia, Canada and New Zealand would also need to take on much more stringent targets under this regime. Many of the major developing countries, such as China, Mexico, South Africa, Brazil are approaching, or have passed the level that would be permissible for per-capita emissions, and would be forced to take reductions in the short-term if the scheme were implemented. They would be very unlikely to support the proposal as it would be seen as a curb on their development. Experts from these countries have shown some interest in alternative frameworks including an element of historical responsibility and capacity to act.

Second, the approach requires upfront agreement to a global stabilisation target, but many countries outside the EU are reluctant to discuss this. Logically, it would make sense to agree a stabilisation level and then from this the respective responsibility of each country would flow. However, the complexity of the issues and political reality is such that a sequential approach is unlikely. The UK is therefore pursuing a two-pronged approach—pressing for agreement on a long-term stabilisation limit while simultaneously maintaining pressure on countries to take ambitious short-term action to mitigate emissions.

Community Programmes

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on how the Community Action 2020 programme will be implemented in Oxfordshire. [17582]

Mr. Morley: Community Action 2020 (CA2020) aims to build on the good work many communities and their local authorities have carried out under the Local Agenda 21 initiative. It is part of the "Together we can" programme for communities launched by my right hon. Friend Hazel Blears MP on 28 June this year.

CA2020 will enable and encourage wider community action by improving access to information, advice and assistance. This will enable local community groups to identify ways they can make a difference in delivering sustainable development.

We are exploring the best ways in which the information, advice and assistance given to communities on sustainable development can be improved. We are working closely with experts in the sustainable development and community sectors to explore this. We hope to work jointly with national and local bodies to provide new tools and methods of support for community groups. These will be applied across England and their take up will very much depend on the interest among local organisations.

We are working closely with voluntary and community sector bodies nationally to strengthen support for local communities on sustainable development.

Our website offers helpful information and ideas which community organisations may like to use www.sustainable-development.gov.uk, and further details of the Community Action 2020 programme will be publicised here.

Departmental Expenditure

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total spending by her Department on *(a)* staff, *(b)* accommodation and *(c)* procurement in the (i) Moray constituency and (ii) Highland Region was for the most recent year for which figures are available. [14845]

Jim Knight: The staff employed in the Highland region[1], which includes the Moray constituency, are not based in a DEFRA building. The costs of these staff, estimated on a standard cost basis, are shown in the following table, together with an estimate of accommodation overheads are based on a regional specific percentage of the staff costs. It is not possible to isolate procurement costs by constituency.

2004–05

£000

	(i) Moray	*(ii) Highland region*[1]
(a) Staff	135	1,749
(b) Accommodation	1	17
(c) Procurement	n/k	n/k

[1] The Scotland parliamentary constituency map was divided into three "regions"; Highlands and Islands, Central Scotland and Borders. The Highlands and Islands "region" that was used for this answer covers the following parliamentary constituencies:
Aberdeen North
Aberdeen South
Aberdeenshire West and Kincardine
Angus
Argyll and Bute
Banff and Buchan
Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross
Dundee East
Dundee West
Fife North East
Gordon
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey
Moray
Na h-Eileannan an Iar
Ochil and Perthshire South
Orkney and Shetland
Perth and Perthshire North
Ross, Skye and Lochaber
Stirling

Information on regional distribution of staff at 1 April 2004 is available in the Libraries of both Houses, and also at, http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_information/statistical_information/statistics/contents_for_civil_service_statistics_2004_report/index.asp.

Figures relating to 1 April 2005 will be published next year.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total spending by her Department on *(a)* staff, *(b)* accommodation and *(c)* procurement in (i) Banff and Buchan and (ii) the North East of Scotland was for the most recent year for which figures are available. [14883]

Jim Knight: The Department does not employ any staff in the Banff and Buchan constituency. The staff employed in North East Scotland are not based in a DEFRA building. The costs of these staff, estimated on a standard cost basis, are shown in the table, together with an estimate of accommodation overheads are based on a Regional specific percentage of the staff costs. It is not possible to isolate procurement costs by constituency.

2004–05

£000

	(i) Banff and Buchan	*(ii) NE Scotland*[1]
(a) Staff	135	1,749
(b) Accommodation	1	17
(c) Procurement	n/k	n/k

[1] The Scotland parliamentary constituency map was divided into three "regions"; Highlands and Islands, Central Scotland and Borders. The nearest approximation to NE Scotland was the Highlands and Islands "region". This was used for this answer and covers the following parliamentary constituencies.
Aberdeen North
Aberdeen South
Aberdeenshire West and Kincardine
Angus
Argyll and Bute
Banff and Buchan
Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross
Dundee East
Dundee West
Fife North East
Gordon
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey
Moray
Na h-Eileannan an Iar
Ochil and Perthshire South
Orkney and Shetland
Perth and Perthshire North
Ross, Skye and Lochaber
Stirling

Information on regional distribution of staff at 1 April 2004 is available in the Libraries of both Houses, and also at, http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_information/statistical_information/statistics/contents_for_civil_service_statistics_2004_report/index.asp.

Figures relating to 1 April 2005 will be published next year.

Nuclear Waste

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list all sites which have been considered by her Department as possible locations for the storage or disposal of nuclear waste. [17774]

Mr. Morley: The following is a list of sites, contained in the joint Defra/Nirex document, Radioactive Waste Inventory 2001, that currently store varying quantities of radioactive waste:

Aldermaston
Amersham
Berkeley
Bradwell
Capenhurst
Cardiff
Chapelcross
Clyde
Culham
Devonport
Donnington
Dounreay
Drigg LLW Disposal Facility
Dungeness
Eskmeals
Fort Halstead
Heysham
Hinkley Point
Hartlepool
Harwell
Hunterston
Oldbury
Portsmouth
Rosyth
Sellafield/Calder Hall
Sizewell
Springfields
Stafford
Torness
Trawsfynydd
Vulcan
Windscale
Winfrith
Wylfa

On 10 June 2005, Nirex published details of a historic short-list of sites compiled in the 1980's as possible locations for a radioactive waste repository. This programme was abandoned in 1997.

No further sites are currently under consideration.

Ruddy Ducks

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will publish the evidence behind the decision to grant licences to cull ruddy ducks. [20762]

Jim Knight: The North American ruddy duck was introduced to wildfowl collections in the UK in the 1940s, from where a small number escaped from captivity and began to breed in the wild. As the UK population of wild ruddy ducks increased, so did the number of ruddy ducks on the European mainland. Hybridisation with the Spanish population of the globally threatened white-headed duck, now numbering some 2,600, is recognised as the most significant threat to that species' long-term survival.

Initial research on control methods was carried out by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (Hughes, 1996) and the three year UK Ruddy Duck Control Trial, commissioned by my Department, sought to verify their findings. The report (published in July 2002, copies available in the Library of the House) indicated that eradication of ruddy ducks from the United Kingdom was feasible within 10 years, and that shooting on over wintering sites was the most effective means of control.

In a written ministerial statement on 3 March 2003, my hon. Friend the Member for Scunthorpe (Mr. Morley) announced that the Government agreed in principle to the eradication of the ruddy duck in United Kingdom. Since that time DEFRA has been funding additional research to refine the effectiveness of the control strategy, and to investigate the effectiveness of alternative control measures such as egg oiling and pricking. A report of the research undertaken to the end of September 2005 is due to be published imminently, and will be available in the Library of the House in due course.

A bid for funding under the LIFE Nature programme was recently approved by the European Commission, which supports eradication as part of efforts to protect the globally endangered white-headed duck. DEFRA's decision to co-fund the eradication programme was informed by the report of the control trial and by the additional research findings, and a licence has now been issued to the Central Science Laboratory to allow them to commence work. Detailed information about the LIFE project can be found on the Commission's website.

The Government have also issued, in England, a general licence to remove the protection afforded to ruddy ducks by domestic legislation. The licence has been kept under review since it was first issued in July 2003, and has been revised to ensure the licence conditions are appropriate. The current licence was issued in December 2004, and is available on the DEFRA website.

Timber

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the amount of illegally logged timber entering the UK from China, with particular reference to wood products. [19624]

Mr. Morley: We are unable to estimate how much illegally logged timber is coming into the UK from China as timber is not identified as legal or illegal at ports of entry. There is currently no legislation in the UK, or the EU, to prevent the import of such timber, but we are seeking such powers through the EU FLEGT process.

Government are working to raise the issue of illegal logging with the Chinese Government. For example, the Eighth EU-China Summit, held in Beijing on 5 September 2004 agreed that the EU and China would work together to tackle the problem of illegal logging in the Asian region.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Beacon Council Status

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list local authorities which have been awarded Beacon Council status for improving urban green spaces. [18617]

Mr. Woolas: The seven authorities who received Beacon status for Improving Urban Green Spaces in April 2002 are as listed:

Halton Borough council
London Borough of Barnet
London Borough of Bexley
London Borough of Brent
London Borough of Enfield
London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
Northamptonshire county council.

Casinos

Mrs. May: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many appeals *(a)* the Deputy Prime Minister and *(b)* the Planning Inspectorate have considered on casino developments in the last three years; and what the verdict was in each case. [18191]

Yvette Cooper: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister, the First Secretary of State has decided two called-in planning applications for mixed use developments that have included a casino element in the last three years, with one being granted planning permission and one refused planning permission. Over the same period the Planning Inspectorate have decided seven appeals for developments with a casino element of which four have been allowed and three dismissed.

Correspondence

Jim Cousins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the Minister for Housing will reply to sections 1 and 3 of the letter from the hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne, Central sent in August on Housing Act 2004 issues. [19268]

Yvette Cooper I replied to my hon. Friend on 13 October.

Disabled Facilities Grants

Mr. Rooney: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much has been allocated in each year since 1996–97 to *(a)* Bradford Metropolitan council, *(b)* Wakefield Metropolitan council and *(c)* local authorities in England for disabled facilities grants. [17935]

Yvette Cooper: Government funding in support of Bradford Metropolitan council and Wakefield Metropolitan council for Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) since 1996 has been as follows:

£000

	Bradford	Wakefield
2005–06	1,135	908
2004–05	1,200	960
2003–04	1,196	885
2002–03	1,196	531
2001–02	947	518
2000–01	884	453
1999–2000	692	321
1998–99	720	312
1997–98	670	346

Government funding in support of local authorities in England for Disabled Facilities Grant since 1996 has been as follows:

£000

	National total
2005–06	103,300
2004–05	101,500
2003–04	99,000
2002–03	88,000
2001–02	84,800
2000–01	71,800
1999–2000	64,849
1998–99	59,000
1997–98	56,000

National totals for DFG before 1997 are not available.

Environmental Impact Assessments

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what requirements exist on local authorities to carry out environmental impact assessments on sites being considered for development; [18292]

(2) what requirements exist to ensure that adequate *(a)* surveys are conducted and *(b)* scientific data are collected during environmental impact assessments; [18293]

(3) what *(a)* guidelines and *(b)* regulations exist concerning how long before consideration of a planning permission application an environmental impact assessment should be carried out; [18294]

(4) what obligations exist for consideration of ecological surveys in consideration of planning applications; and what requirements there are on the *(a)* age and *(b)* accuracy of these surveys. [18295]

Yvette Cooper: The requirements relating to environmental impact assessment of development falling within the planning system are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/293).

For some types of development environmental impact assessment (EIA) is mandatory. For others it is required if the local planning authority considers that the particular development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. Where EIA is required, the developer must provide environmental information (called an Environmental Statement) which includes: a description of the development comprising information on the site, design and size of the development; a description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected including, in particular, population, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, including the architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape

and the inter-relationship between all these aspects; a description of the measures envisaged to mitigate any significant adverse effects; an outline of any alternatives considered; and a non-technical summary of the above information. The Environmental Statement is circulated to statutory consultation bodies, and made available to the public, for comment.

The Regulations do not specify when the EIA has to be carried out. However, a planning authority is prohibited from granting planning permission unless an Environmental Statement has been provided. If the authority considers there are deficiencies in the Environmental Statement it can require an applicant to provide further information or produce evidence needed to verify any information in the Statement. In determining an application the planning authority must take account of the Environmental Statement, any further information provided, and any comments or representations made by statutory consultees and the public.

Home Information Packs

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what estimate has been made of the revenue from VAT likely to be raised from home information packs; [17441]

(2) whether value added tax will be levied on home information packs. [17445]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been asked to reply.

The VAT treatment of home information packs will depend on a number of factors. The exact nature of the packs, and how they will be provided, is still under consideration, and draft regulations are expected to be published shortly. HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are discussing the possible VAT treatment of these packs, and suppliers of home information packs, or parts thereof, will be able to contact HMRC for advice as required and separate guidance will be issued if appropriate.

No estimate has been made of the revenue yield from home information packs.

Homelessness

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* priority homeless and *(b)* homeless households were in temporary accommodation in England in each quarter since Q1 1993. [17386]

Yvette Cooper: The number of households accepted by local authorities in England as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need during each quarter since January—March 1993, and the number of households in temporary accommodation arranged by authorities under homelessness legislation as at the end of each quarter, is tabled.

The duty owed to a person accepted as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need is to secure suitable accommodation. If a settled home is not immediately available, the authority may secure temporary accommodation until a settled home becomes available. As an alternative to the provision of temporary accommodation some authorities arrange for households to remain in their current accommodation (homeless at home), until a settled solution becomes available.

Local authority activity on homelessness: England

	Total priority acceptances during the quarter[1]	*Total in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter*[2]
1993		
Quarter 1	34,680	61,380
Quarter 2	32,520	57,920
Quarter 3	32,160	56,500
Quarter 4	28,270	53,580
1994		
Quarter 1	32,410	52,340
Quarter 2	28,760	48,660
Quarter 3	30,410	48,110
Quarter 4	26,910	45,630
1995		
Quarter 1	30,770	46,350
Quarter 2	29,220	45,940
Quarter 3	30,910	46,690
Quarter 4	26,590	44,140
1996		
Quarter 1	29,830	43,240
Quarter 2	28,350	43,300
Quarter 3	28,810	43,830
Quarter 4	26,600	42,190
1997		
Quarter 1	26,850	41,250
Quarter 2	24,260	43,720
Quarter 3	26,260	45,290
Quarter 4	24,630	44,870
1998		
Quarter 1	27,280	47,520
Quarter 2	25,590	49,390
Quarter 3	26,870	52,510
Quarter 4	24,890	53,790
1999		
Quarter 1	26,910	56,580
Quarter 2	25,970	58,430
Quarter 3	28,020	61,450
Quarter 4	24,470	62,180
2000		
Quarter 1	27,120	65,170
Quarter 2	27,590	67,520
Quarter 3	29,210	71,860
Quarter 4	27,420	73,080
2001		
Quarter 1	30,450	75,200
Quarter 2	28,950	75,920
Quarter 3	30,590	77,800
Quarter 4	27,840	77,510
2002		
Quarter 1	29,280	80,200
Quarter 2	30,460	81,660
Quarter 3	33,310	85,010
Quarter 4	30,790	85,140
2003		
Quarter 1	33,980	89,040
Quarter 2	34,090	91,870
Quarter 3	35,770	94,440
Quarter 4	31,750	94,610
2004		
Quarter 1	33,820	97,680
Quarter 2[3]	32,900	99,530
Quarters 3[3]	32,150	101,300

Local authority activity on homelessness: England

	Total priority acceptances during the quarter[1]	Total in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter[2]
Quarter 4[3]	28,890	101,030
2005		
Quarter 1[3]	26,920	101,070
Quarter 2[3]	27,310	100,970

[1] All households eligible under homelessness legislation, found to be unintentionally homeless and in a priority need category and consequently owed a main homelessness duty.
[2] Households in accommodation arranged by local authorities either pending a decision on their homelessness application or awaiting allocation of a settled home following acceptance.
[3] Provisional data.
Source:
ODPM: Homelessness returns (quarterly)

Homes for Life Standard

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on progress in the adoption of the homes for life standard in new build. [17609]

Yvette Cooper: The Government expects shortly to provide a response to the Report of the House of Lords Science and Technology Select Committee on Ageing Populations, Recommendation 9.19 which covers the Lifetime Home Standards.

Housing

Mr. Laws: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which 25 local authorities in England have *(a)* the largest number of people on the housing register and *(b)* the largest waiting lists for processing homeless applications; and if he will make a statement. [18624]

Yvette Cooper: Table A presents the 25 local authorities in England reporting the highest number of households on their housing register as at 1 April this year, and Table B presents the 25 local authorities with the largest number of households accepted as owed a main homelessness duty, and in temporary accommodation (with their households) arranged by the authority awaiting a settled home as at 30 June.

Local authorities do not hold a waiting list for homeless applications; as soon as they have reason to believe that a person is homeless or threatened with homelessness they must make inquiries to determine whether any duty is owed under the homelessness legislation. Information about the length of time taken by local authorities to process applications is not collected centrally, but The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Homelessness Code of Guidance recommends that wherever possible inquiries should be completed, and the applicant notified, within 33 working days.

The duty owed to an applicant, on behalf of the household, accepted as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need is to secure suitable accommodation for the applicant and his or her household. In many cases, a settled home is not immediately available, and the local housing authority will secure temporary accommodation until a settled home becomes available. In such cases, the applicant household will usually join the housing register for an allocation of housing under Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 (although other housing options such as a qualifying offer of an assured shorthold tenancy can also bring the homelessness duty to an end).

The Government's homelessness strategy Sustainable Communities: settled homes; changing lives sets out the challenging aim to halve the number of households in insecure temporary accommodation by 2010.

Table A: Local authorities with the 25 highest figures for numbers of households on their housing register[1] as at 1 April 2005

Local authority	Region	Number of households
1. Sheffield	Yorkshire and the Humber	72,604
2. Bradford	Yorkshire and the Humber	32,046
3. Leeds	Yorkshire and the Humber	30,699
4. Newham	London	25,317
5. Tower Hamlets	London	21,183
6. Haringey	London	19,930
7. Sandwell	West Midlands	19,655
8. Lewisham	London	18,279
9. Manchester	North West	17,772
10. Birmingham	West Midlands	17,493
11. Brent	London	17,351
12. Camden	London	16,532
13. Sunderland	North East	16,222
14. Bolton	North West	16,096
15. Wirral	North West	15,524
16. Ealing	London	14,324
17. Rotherham	Yorkshire and the Humber	13,903
18. Barnet	London	13,627
19. Newcastle upon Tyne	North East	13,099
20. East Riding of Yorkshire	Yorkshire and the Humber	12,163
21. Walsall	West Midlands	12,024
22. Doncaster	Yorkshire and the Humber	11,937
23. Bristol	South West	11,809
24. Sefton	North West	11,637
25. Leicester	East Midlands	11,482

[1] Excludes existing tenants awaiting a transfer. Local authorities may maintain a common waiting list with housing associations in their district, but information is not held centrally where a housing association maintains a separate waiting list.
Source:
ODPM Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (HSSA) (annual)

Table B: Local authorities with the 25 highest figures for numbers of households in temporary accommodation [1], as at 30 June 2005

Local authority	Region	Number of households
Newham	London	6,117 E
Haringey	London	4,897
Brent	London	4,027
Westminster	London	3,075
Croydon	London	2,877
Enfield	London	2,739
Tower Hamlets	London	2,654
Ealing	London	2,210
Barnet	London	2,175
Camden	London	1,997
Lambeth	London	1,963
Redbridge	London	[2]1,891
Hackney	London	[2]1,865
Lewisham	London	1,858
Hillingdon	London	1,776
Waltham Forest	London	1,692
Hammersmith and Fulham	London	1,579
Wandsworth	London	1,394
Islington	London	1,215

Table B: Local authorities with the 25 highest figures for numbers of households in temporary accommodation [1], as at 30 June 2005

Local authority	*Region*	*Number of households*
Hounslow	London	1,205
Harrow	London	1,180
Kensington and Chelsea	London	1,053
Luton	East of England	945
Southwark	London	832
Swindon	South West	810

[1] Households in accommodation arranged by local authorities awaiting allocation of a settled home following acceptance of a main homelessness duty.
[2] An estimated figure, based on reported totals (which included but did not distinguish, those in TA pending a decision on their homelessness application), or on other available information.
Source:
ODPM P1E Homelessness returns (quarterly)

Housing Task Force

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his housing task force is required to ensure tenant involvement after housing transfer. [17860]

Yvette Cooper: The Community Housing Task Force is not required to provide support for local authorities or tenants after the transfer.

Planning Committees

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance his Department has issued to local authorities in relation to ward councillors sitting on planning committees considering planning applications from their own ward; and if he will make a statement. [17376]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of The Deputy Prime Minister has issued no guidance specifically in respect of actions by councillors sitting on planning committees. However, in 2001 the Government issued the statutory Model Code of Conduct for local government members, which sets out standards of conduct expected of all members. Guidance on the operation of the code has been issued by the Standards Board for England.

In addition, The Local Government Association issued guidance in January this year "Probity in Planning: The Role of Councillors and Officers" and this makes clear that members who take an active stand in supporting or assisting a planning application should not take part in discussions on that application and should withdraw from the planning committee.

Planning Permission

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) on what basis the consultation period for planning permission applications is decided; [18285]

(2) under what conditions the consultation period for planning permission applications may be extended; [18286]

(3) how many complaints regarding the consultation process for planning permission have been received by his Department in each year since 1997; [18287]

(4) what obligations there are on local authorities to inform local residents of planning permission applications in their vicinity; [18288]

(5) whether there are regulations relating to the amount of time local authorities must allow for notifying the public before a planning permission application is considered. [18289]

Yvette Cooper: Article 8 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 says that no application may be determined until 21 days have elapsed since notice of the application was displayed or served. This period is to allow people time to comment. Most householder and other minor development must be publicised by notice near the application site, or by letter to those with land adjoining it. Larger schemes should also be publicised by advertisement in local newspapers and on the authority's website. In DoE Circular 15/92, "Publicity for Planning Applications", authorities are urged to do more than comply with the legal requirement. Moreover, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires each authority to prepare Statements of Community Involvement, which should include the authority's policy for community involvement on planning applications.

No statistics are kept on the numbers of complaints about the consultation process for planning permissions. If a planning decision ignores some crucial, relevant consideration, it might be open to challenge through the courts.

An authority sets its own closing date for representations about a proposal. There is nothing in law to prevent it accepting a late comment if appropriate. However, if the matter is to go to committee, the authority will need to make sure it complies with the Local Government Act 1972 as amended, which requires relevant committee papers to be made public at least five days before the committee discusses the case.

Regional Chambers

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister who is responsible for the liabilities of England's Regional Chambers. [17148]

Yvette Cooper: The English Regional Assemblies are organisations in their own right and are responsible for their own liabilities.

Social Housing

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he has asked the Housing Corporation to take to improve tenant involvement in running housing associations. [17933]

Yvette Cooper: The Housing Corporation has a range of policies in place to encourage tenant involvement. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Housing Corporation are looking at ways to strengthen tenant involvement in the future.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his estimate is of the total number of council houses transferred to *(a)* housing associations and *(b)* arm's length management organisations (i) before May 1997 and (ii) since May 1997. [17946]

Yvette Cooper: Prior to May 1997, 245,705 council houses were transferred to registered social landlords (RSLs). Since May 1997, a further 683,578 council homes have been transferred to RSLs.

The first Arm's Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) were set up in 2002. They manage local authorities' housing stock but ownership of that stock is not transferred to them. Currently about 682,000 homes owned by local authorities are managed by ALMOs.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will revise his calculations of the amount of social housing necessary over the period to 2010 to take account of the proportion of young people unable to raise the deposit to become first-time buyers. [17955]

Yvette Cooper: Provision of social rented housing to 2010 will be subject to the outcome of the 2007 Spending Review and a variety of policy decisions including our response to the Barker Review. The Government recently announced a number of measures to help households into low cost home ownership.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what progress has been made towards the Government's target of making all social housing decent by 2010. [19329]

Yvette Cooper: The Government have reduced the number of non-decent social homes by more than one million. Work completed and plans in place take us 90 per cent. of the way to meeting the target. We are now focusing our efforts on dealing with the remaining 10 per cent.

HOME DEPARTMENT

European Contractors

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list contractors based in other EU member states that are providing services to his Department. [15455]

Paul Goggins: The Department awards all contracts in line with the UK's objective of achieving value for money, and in line with EU treaty obligations on transparency and free movement of goods and services.

The list of contractors based in other EU member states that are currently providing services to the Department comprises:

Seratec GmbH Germany

IBA GmbH Germany

Forensic Tech Ireland

U Cables SpainMegazyne International Ireland

Manthei Mess Systeme Germany

Victoria Scandinavian Sweden

Verlag Information Ambs GmbH

GermanySteintor Verlag GmbH

GermanyChromSword Baltic SIA LatviaEricsson

SwedenGWV Fachverlage Germany

Mehler Vario System GmbH Sweden.

Football Hooliganism

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many football supporters in *(a)* England and *(b)* Wales are subject to football banning orders preventing travel to football matches outside the UK. [19498]

Paul Goggins: As of 17 October, the courts have imposed 3,157 football banning orders preventing the subjects from travelling to matches overseas.

There are 2,927 England supporters and 230 Wales supporters subject to football banning orders.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many arrests relating to football hooliganism there have been since 2001. [19387]

Paul Goggins: Details of football-related arrests and football attendances for the seasons 2001–02 to 2003–04 is provided in the table.

Season	*Football-related arrests*	*Attendance*
2001–02	3,702	33,278,196
2002–03	4,413	34,041,632
2003–04	4,067	36,180,716

A detailed report on the impact of existing football legislation, with supporting statistical information, and details of last season's arrests will be published later this month.

Magic Mushrooms

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many submissions were received *(a)* in favour and *(b)* against the reclassification of magic mushrooms prior to the Drugs Act 2005 being passed. [16481]

Paul Goggins: The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs, which is a recognised expert body on drug misuse matters, made clear its support for the measure. The Home Office received no submissions in favour of the clarification of the law in respect of magic mushrooms prior to the Drugs Act 2005 being granted Royal Assent on seven April and four submissions against.

National Offender Management Service

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications he has received for the post of the head of the National Offender Management Service; and when he expects to make an appointment. [19223]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 18 October 2005]:* There were 10 applications for the post of Chief Executive of the National Offender Management Service. Interviews have been held, and an announcement will be made shortly.

People Trafficking

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures are being taken to combat the trafficking of women into the UK to work as prostitutes. [19381]

Paul Goggins: The Government are committed to tackling human trafficking. It has a comprehensive strategy encompassing legislation, law enforcement, prevention, international cooperation and support for victims. The Government provides £20 million of funding annually to Reflex, the multi-agency task force which coordinates the law enforcement response to organised immigration crime, including people trafficking.

In the year to March 2005 Reflex carried out 343 operations which led to 149 disruptions, 1,456 arrests and the seizure of over £5.5 million in criminal assets. The UK has made people trafficking a priority during its EU presidency. It is working closely with the Commission in developing an EU plan on preventing and combating trafficking in persons. In March 2003 a small scale Home Office-funded pilot scheme was launched in partnership with Eaves Housing for Women to provide safe accommodation and one-to-one support for adult women who have been trafficked into the UK to work as prostitutes. The Scheme has recently been formally evaluated and overall findings were positive on the model and quality of support provided. A copy of the summary findings from the evaluation can be obtained from:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/whatsnew1.html.

The full evaluation report is currently being considered and decisions about the future scope and nature of support will be made in light of its findings.

Prisons

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many members of Prison Service staff have been *(a)* reinstated to posts within the service and *(b)* compensated but not reinstated following successful industrial tribunal appeals where the appellant has been proved to have been dismissed unfairly since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [16367]

Fiona Mactaggart: This information is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what quantity of drugs have been seized in each London prison from *(a)* prisoners, *(b)* visitors, *(c)* prison governors, *(d)* officers and *(e)* other staff in each month of 2005; what quantity of drugs has been found in each London prison thrown over the wall in each month; and if he will make a statement. [16371]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested is contained in the following table. The information on quantity is not collected routinely and the figures in the table indicate the number of occasions on which drugs were found. In addition, at Holloway prison drugs have been intercepted in mail being sent in to prisoners on six occasions in 2005. In Belmarsh there were six unattributable finds in the prison, once in incoming mail and on five occasions at various locations within the prison.

Drugs finds from January 2005 to September 2005

Subject	*January*	*February*	*March*	*April*	*May*	*June*	*July*	*August*	*September*
HMP Belmarsh									
Prisoners	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0
Visitors	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prison Governors	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prison Officers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drugs thrown over the wall	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HMP and YOI Feltham									
Prisoners	4	2	11	6	5	5	2	4	10
Visitors	1	3	4	1	1	2	0	0	0
Prison Governors	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prison Officers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drugs thrown over wall	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
HMP and YOI Holloway									
Prisoners	3	1	1	3	1	0	1	3	0
Visitors	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prison Governors	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prison Officers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drugs thrown over wall	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HMP Pentonville									
Prisoners	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2
Visitors	1	6	5	8	2	6	0	4	4
Prison Governors	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prison Officers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drugs thrown over wall	3	2	2	2	1	1	3	3	3
HMP Wandsworth									
Prisoners	14	4	7	2	7	7	9	8	5

Drugs finds from January 2005 to September 2005

Subject	*January*	*February*	*March*	*April*	*May*	*June*	*July*	*August*	*September*
Visitors	4	5	3	6	3	4	5	3	5
Prison Governors	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Prison Officers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drugs thrown over wall	4	3	2	3	2	7	2	2	3
HMP Wormwood Scrubs									
Prisoners	9	10	1	12	9	3	4	3	5
Visitors	2	3	0	3	0	2	3	3	4
Prison Governors	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prison Officers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drugs thrown over the wall	9	11	15	14	10	24	17	13	17

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prison cells in England and Wales have capacity for *(a)* one inmate, *(b)* two inmates and *(c)* three or more inmates. [17789]

Fiona Mactaggart: This information is not recorded centrally and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

All prisoner accommodation is certified by Prison Service area managers (as required by s.14 of the Prison Act 1952). Cell capacity may only be increased (for example, when single cells are used to house two prisoners), when the area manager has assessed them to be of adequate size and condition for doing so.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of prisoners have been in overcrowded cells in each of the last five years for which records are available. [17790]

Fiona Mactaggart: The following table shows the percentage of prisoners held in crowded accommodation for the last five full financial years. The data for 2005–06 are the average for this financial year to 30 September 2005.

	Percentage of prisoners held in crowded conditions
2000–01	17.5
2001–02	18.6
2002–03	23.4
2003–04	24.0
2004–05	24.1
2005–06	23.6

School of Economic Science

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will seek to legislate against the activity of religious cults, with particular reference to the School of Economic Science. [19843]

Paul Goggins: The Secretary of State for the Home Department has no plans to legislate against the activity of religious cults.

Secure Training Centres

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will publish the full report on the investigation into Rainsbrook Secure Training Centre. [17272]

Fiona Mactaggart: There is no plan to publish the Serious Incident Review report on the death of Gareth Myatt at Rainsbrook while a criminal investigation is in progress. When that investigation has concluded, it will be for the coroner to decide whether the report can be published in advance of the inquest.

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time staff are employed in each of the four secure training centres. [17273]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested is given in the following table.

Staff employed in secure training centres

STC	*Full-time*	*Part-time*
Medway	239	17
Rainsbrook	253	15
Hassockfield	137	11
Oakhill	270	21

South London and Maudsley Trust

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners were transferred to the care of the South London and Maudsley Trust for drug rehabilitation and mental health care in the last year for which figures are available. [17576]

Fiona Mactaggart: 32 prisoners were transferred from prison to the South London and Maudsley Hospital between 30 September 2004 and 1 October 2005.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Auditor Liability

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he has had with *(a)* officials and *(b)* auditing firms about reform of auditor liability. [19627]

Alun Michael: Ministers and officials have had numerous discussions with auditing firms about auditor liability, particularly since the publication of the consultative document "Director and auditor liability" in December 2003. We also continue to have discussions on the subject with companies and investors who have an interest as customers of auditors, and with bodies representing companies, investors and accountants.

Football Broadcasting

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans he has to meet *(a)* the FA Premier League, *(b)* the European Commissioner for Competition, *(c)* the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, *(d)* Ofcom and *(e)* the Office of Fair Trading to discuss the structure of Premier League television broadcasting rights from season 2007–08 onwards. [20316]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I have no such plans to meet to discuss this case.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what role *(a)* Ofcom and *(b)* the Office of Fair Trading are playing in implementing European competition law regarding the structure of premier league television broadcasting rights from season 2007–08 onwards. [20338]

Mr. Sutcliffe: These are matters for Ofcom and OFT, as independent regulators. Accordingly, officials have asked the chief executive of both organisations to respond directly the hon. Member. Copies of the chief executives' letters will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions his Department has had since May with the European Commission on the structure of premier league television broadcasting rights from season 2007–08 onwards. [20339]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Ministers and officials from this Department are in contact with the European Commission and will continue to remain so in order to facilitate an agreement which is good for football and good for the fans.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions his Department has had with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport since May 2005 on the roles of *(a)* Ofcom and *(b)* the Office of Fair Trading in the matter of deciding the structure of FA Premier League television broadcasting rights from season 2007–08 onwards. [20340]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Ministers and officials in this Department and from DCMS have stayed in close contact throughout, both through briefing meetings and telephone calls, with Ofcom and OFT and will continue to do so in order to facilitate an agreement which is good for football and good for the fans.

Ministerial Travel

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many air miles were accrued through departmental ministerial travel in 2004–05, broken down by Minister; how many were *(a)* foregone and *(b)* donated to charity, broken down by charity; and whether air miles accrued by officials were required to be (i) foregone and (ii) given to charity. [17335]

Alan Johnson: No air miles were accrued through departmental ministerial travel in 2004–05.

Ministerial travel is conducted in accordance with the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers. Guidance for Ministers on the use of air miles is set out in the Ministerial Code. The guidance makes clear that air miles should be used only for official purposes or else foregone. However, if it is impracticable to use the benefits for Government travel, there is no objection to Ministers donating them to charity if this is permissible under the terms of the airline's scheme and the charity is one chosen by the airline.

Similar rules are in place for officials.

Motorsport Unit

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how much the Government have allocated to the motorsport unit since its inception. [19362]

(2) what assessment he has made of the efficacy of the Government motorsport unit; [19363]

(3) what assessment he has made of the suitability of the projects supported to date by the Government motorsport unit; and if he will make a statement; [19364]

(4) what projects have been funded by the Government motorsport unit; and how much each received; [19365]

(5) what procedure his Department has in place to assess those projects which have received funding to date from the Government motorsport unit; [19366]

(6) what assessment he has made of the propriety of Government motorsport unit's *(a)* formula women and *(b)* cruisesport projects; [19367]

(7) how much the *(a)* formula women and *(b)* cruisesport projects have received in funding from the Government motorsport unit since its creation; [19368]

(8) if he will make a statement on the future of the Government motorsport unit. [19369]

Alun Michael: On 11 July 2003 the then Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health, announced a Government commitment of £16 million over five years to fund the recommendations of the motorsport competitiveness panel, whose report was published on the same date. The panel was made up of leading figures from the motorsport industry, sport and academia together with officials from relevant departments. Its role was to recommend ways to strengthen the industry and sport from technicians at a grass roots level right up to the Formula 1 drivers and engineers at the top level of motorsport.

The report recommended that a motorsport development board be created to lead, coordinate and prioritise development activities and an RDA-led Government motorsport unit should be formed to coordinate available Government resources towards the motorsport cluster. The board and the RDA-led unit are collectively known as motorsport development UK (MDUK).

The projects now being taken forward by motorsports development UK are based upon the panel's priorities. These have not been revisited and it would be for the organisation itself to recommend any changes, either to the projects or the way in which they are being implemented. Assessment of the propriety and value for money of each project is carried out in line with

the established procedures of the funding body concerned and action is taken where necessary to safeguard public funds.

There has been some encouraging progress particularly in the use of bio-fuels in motorsport and also engaging young people to take part in engineering activities with a motorsport theme—the "Learning Grid'.

Spending to date on the five projects now being pursued is shown in the following table:

Project theme	*Spend to date (£)*
Motorsport Academy	364,898
The Learning Grid	442,230
Business Development	213,545
Energy Efficient Motorsport	463,726
Widening Participation	265,574
Total project spend	1,749,973

Note:
"Formula Woman" is a commercial enterprise owned and organised by Formula Woman International Ltd. No MDUK funding has been granted to this venture.

"CruiseSport" is one of the areas of activity within MDUK's project to widen participation and promote social inclusion in motorsport. Spend to date is £120,000. This figure is included within the total for widening participation is in the table.

Paternity Leave

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what percentage of those entitled to paid paternity leave took advantage of their right during *(a)* 2005 and *(b)* 2004. [17310]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Equal Opportunities Commission's survey "Dads and Their Babies: Leave Arrangements and the First Year", published earlier this year and part-funded by DTI, found that nine out of 10 fathers take time off work to spend with a new child and that over two-thirds of fathers currently take up the paternity entitlements available to them. The survey also found that a large percentage of employers are providing support for fathers which goes beyond the statutory provision and that almost three-quarters (72 per cent.) of the surveyed fathers who took paternity leave took at least some of this at full pay. We estimate that around 415,000 working fathers are eligible for statutory paid paternity leave.

Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment Directive

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to ensure that the UK's compliance with the waste electronic and electrical equipment directive is compatible with other environmental priorities. [19612]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government aims to introduce its legislation for the UK implementation of the waste electrical and electronic equipment directive to the House shortly; and to publish its accompanying non-statutory guidance at the same time. It intends that the implementation of the WEEE Directive should complement other environmental policy objectives in relation to waste collection, treatment and disposal; that it should discourage fly-tipping; and that it should minimise other potential adverse environmental impacts such as traffic emissions and congestion.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Anniversary Commemoration

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will commemorate the 450th anniversary of *(a)* the death of Mary Tudor, *(b)* the accession of Elizabeth I and *(c)* the Elizabethan parliamentary settlement of the Church of England. [17085]

Mr. Lammy: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has no plans at present to commemorate the 450th anniversary of the death of Mary Tudor, the accession of Elizabeth I and the Elizabethan parliamentary settlement of the Church of England, but it is possible that some of DCMS's sponsored bodies may choose to do so and will announce their plans closer to the time.

Broadband

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to increase the public take-up of broadband internet access in (i) East Sussex and (ii) the UK as a whole. [18714]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* I have been asked to reply.

The Government published on 1 April 2005 "Connecting the UK: the Digital Strategy". The strategy outlines the policy focus towards stimulating effective take-up and use of ICT. The strategy aims to address the digital divide that currently sees some groups excluded from the benefits to be gained from the internet.

Plans also exist regionally to increase take-up of broadband. Organisations such as "Broadband East Sussex Partnership" which includes Access East Sussex, BT, The Education Authority, The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), Sussex Enterprise, East Sussex Economic Partnership and the Learning and Skills Council are working with the Sussex Enterprise, local libraries and councils to promote broadband to individuals and businesses. The take-up of broadband in the UK is increasing at 70,000 subscribers a week.

Departmental IT Projects

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list for each IT project her Department has undertaken since May 1997 which has incurred a total expenditure of £5 million or more *(a)* the name of the project, *(b)* its intended purpose, *(c)* the principal contractors involved and the payments made to each, *(d)* the original estimate of the cost of the project, *(e)* the actual outturn of expenditure on the project, *(f)* the intended date on which the project was to be fully implemented, *(g)* the actual date on which it was fully implemented or cancelled, *(h)* modifications which have been made to the project since it was first commissioned, *(i)* contractors on the

project whose contracts have been cancelled, *(j)* replacement or additional contractors on the project, *(k)* the most reliable estimate of public expenditure saved as a result of implementing the project and *(l)* the most reliable estimates of improved performance of departmental functions as a result of implementing the project. [20625]

Mr. Lammy: My Department has not undertaken any IT projects of that value since 1997.

Olympic Lottery Games

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether she has made representations to the Treasury about the tax revenue from the new Olympic lottery games. [19781]

Mr. Caborn: The taxation of Olympic themed lottery games is a matter for the Chancellor. The Government have made clear that it will apply the same principles that apply to the national lottery to any Olympic themed lottery games. The Secretary of State has not made representations on the taxation of the Olympic themed lottery games.

Premier League Football (TV Rights)

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) pursuant to the written answer of 6 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 265–66W, on premier league football (TV rights), if she will list the dates of the meetings between *(a)* the Office of Fair Trading and *(b)* Ofcom with (i) the European Commissioner for competition and (ii) other persons working at the European Commission which have taken place since 1 June 2004; [19421]

(2) pursuant to the written answer of 6 June 2005, *Official Report*, columns 265–66W, on premier league football (TV rights), if she will list the dates of the meetings between *(a)* Ofcom and *(b)* the Office of Fair Trading and the FA premier league which have taken place since 1 June 2004; [19422]

(3) what discussions *(a)* Ofcom and *(b)* the Office of Fair Trading have had with the FA premier league since 1 June 2004 on the matter of deciding the structure of FA premier league television broadcasting rights from season 2007–08 onwards; [19423]

(4) what discussions *(a)* Ofcom and *(b)* the Office of Fair Trading have had since 1 June 2004 with (i) the European Commission and (ii) the European Commissioner for Competition on the matter of deciding the structure of FA premier league television broadcasting rights from season 2007–08 onwards. [19424]

Mr. Caborn: The matters raised are the responsibility of Ofcom and OFT, as independent regulators. Accordingly, officials have asked the Chief Executives of both organisations to respond directly to the hon. Member. Copies of the Chief Executives' letters will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

School Sport

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much of the £750 million pledged to school sport by the Prime Minister at the 2000 Labour party conference has been *(a)* committed, *(b)* spent and *(c)* spent via the Football Foundation. [19782]

Mr. Caborn: £670.7 million of the new opportunities for PE and sport (NOPES) funding has been committed to date, with £194.2 million drawn down by local education authorities.

The Football Foundation has committed all of its £30 million NOPES allocation and has spent £11.2 million of that amount. These figures are included in the amounts given above.

Almost 90 per cent. of NOPES funding has now been committed. We anticipate that most of the remaining funding will be committed by December 2005 with the great majority of new facilities in use by spring 2006, in line with the original timetable.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adult Education

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if she will list the adult education allocations for each Learning and Skills Council for *(a)* 2005–06, *(b)* 2004–05 and *(c)* 2003–04; [10742]

(2) what the level of participation was in adult education in each Learning and Skills Council area in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2003–04; [10743]

(3) what estimate her Department has made of participation in adult education in each Learning and Skills Council area for 2005–06. [10744]

Phil Hope: The exact makeup and distribution of learning provision at local level are matters for local Learning and Skills Councils and their partners in colleges and other providers, according to their assessment of local needs and priorities. I have therefore asked Mark Haysom, the LSC's chief executive, to write to my hon. Friend with more detailed information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom to Mr Gordon Marsden dated 28 July 2005:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary Questions to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills regarding participation in, and funding allocations for, adult education.

As you will know, adult participation in education and skills development can take many forms. The main LSC-funded programmes are Work Based Learning (WBL), general Further Education (FE) and Adult & Community Learning (ACL). Annex 1 attached shows how much funding has been allocated to each of our local Learning and Skills Councils for these programmes, in total, for the 2003/04 and 2004/05 years. For 2005/06, you will see that in some regions (where monetary amounts appear against the Regional Office) the details are not yet finalised. We aim to publish final information on our web site as soon as we can.

We also allocate funding for other types of adult provision: employer-based provision through the Employer Training Pilots (ETP), soon to be rolled-out across the country as a National Employer Training Programme and the Workforce Development programme. Taken together, approximate funding levels for these programmes over the 3 years are 2003–04 £84 million, 2004–05 £140 million, 2005–06 £196 million;

learning specifically aimed at people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD). For adults, spend figures over the 3 years are approximately £50 million in 03/04, £66 million in 04/05 and we expect around £67 million in 05/06;

programmes arranged by the University for Industry (UfI), where budgets for the 3 years are in the region of £164 million, £164 million and £141 million;

School 6th Form provision for students aged 19+ at approximately £3.6 million in 03/04 and £4.5 million in 04/05. We can't say how many pupils there will be aged 19 and over in 2005/06 just yet.

In addition, we provide support for learners through Additional Learning Support for specific student needs, around 40 per cent. of which is attributable to adults or, over the 3 years roughly £123 million, £132 million and £135 million, Learner Support Funds, also provide financial support in cases of hardship and to meet childcare costs. These total £80 million a year for adults. Adult Learning Grants are also being piloted in 19 LSC areas at an annual cost of £12 million.

We also fund information, advice and guidance services for adult learners and potential learners at £36 million, £37 million and £38 million over the 3 years in question.

I have not included in Annex 1, the current funding for these programmes, because this would distort the comparison between local LSCs, as some of this funding is routed to particular parts of the country where provision is available or where we are piloting.

Annex 2 provides the participation information requested for 2003/04 and 2004/05. Figures for 2003/04 are actuals. Those for 2004/05 are estimated outturns—the 2004/05 academic year is yet to finish and, particularly for adult education which is primarily made up of shorter courses, the pattern of delivery across the academic year changes from year to year, making accurate prediction of full-year outturn difficult. Local LSCs are currently talking with providers across the whole range of our programmes for the 2005/06 year. It is too early to say what levels of participation we will see, but the LSC expects to achieve the targets we have been set on delivering the Government's priorities. This will lead to shifts in the balance of provision across programmes and we do expect a reduction in adult numbers in 2005/06 as a result. Our current estimate is that this will be around 300,000 learners, a reduction of around 7 per cent. from the 2004/05 planned level.

Regarding your question on future enrolments by over 25s in level 3 and level 4 courses, we are not able to say at this time, what the impact will be. Whilst each of our local LSCs plan provision with their providers, we don't manage providers at that level of detail. Colleges and other adult education providers will make their own decisions on the number of learners they recruit and the level of fees they may charge to meet course costs.

I hope this is helpful.

Annex 1

LSC Name	*2003/04 Allocation*			
	FE	*WBL (19+)*	*ACL*	*Total*
Norfolk	19,157,086	2,921,592	2,351,796	24,430,474
Cambridgeshire	18,507,467	2,222,370	2,484,608	23,214,445
Suffolk	14,770,183	3,162,014	2,823,263	20,755,460
Bedfordshire and Luton	20,688,000	1,222,944	1,965,011	23,875,955
Hertfordshire	23,671,000	2,651,779	2,860,994	29,183,773
Essex	29,412,441	4,805,988	7,716,175	41,934,604
Regional Budget—East of England				0
East of England Total	126,206,177	16,986,687	20,201,847	163,394,711
Derbyshire	33,090,901	3,816,306	6,058,735	42,965,942
Nottinghamshire	47,859,536	5,074,842	3,520,897	56,455,275
Lincolnshire and Rutland	14,067,201	2,588,687	2,387,475	19,043,363
Leicestershire	36,440,746	2,038,038	6,208,593	44,687,371
Northamptonshire	15,927,000	2,665,697	2,292,541	20,885,238
Regional Budget—East Midlands				0
East Midlands Total	147,385,378	16,183,570	20,468,241	184,037,189
London North	54,021,810	2,045,319	5,186,291	61,253,420
London West	59,337,184	2,647,081	6,717,814	68,702,079
London Central	118,090,284	4,531,838	12,542,537	135,164,659
London East	112,132,881	5,055,375	16,505,406	133,693,662
London South	47,508,170	3,774,394	7,522,002	58,804,566
Regional Budget—Greater London				0
Greater London Total	391,090,329	18,054,007	48,474,050	457,618,386
Northumberland	6,520,864	1,236,167	508,585	8,265,616
Tyne and Wear	54,746,306	5,605,844	5,868,356	66,220,506
County Durham	15,902,129	1,764,859	2,239,611	19,906,599
Tees Valley	25,100,362	3,926,953	4,357,504	33,384,819
Regional Budget—North East				0
North East Total	102,269,661	12,533,823	12,974,056	127,777,540
Cumbria	12,584,017	2,018,950	1,475,744	16,078,711
Lancashire	50,267,380	5,193,195	8,687,600	64,148,175
Greater Merseyside	56,949,165	9,589,191	8,430,726	74,969,082
Greater Manchester	93,061,000	12,419,682	14,578,452	120,059,134
Cheshire and Warrington	22,952,000	4,168,432	2,413,581	29,534,013
Regional Budget—North West				0
North West Total	235,813,562	33,389,450	35,586,103	304,789,115
MKOB	31,455,029	5,409,905	5,689,540	42,554,474
Berkshire	21,310,729	3,290,962	3,577,090	28,178,781
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	50,355,843	5,122,003	3,089,659	58,567,505
Surrey	21,810,689	1,237,358	3,833,000	26,881,047
Sussex	38,065,188	4,369,946	4,635,867	47,071,001
Kent and Medway	38,956,000	4,599,361	8,433,000	52,988,361
Regional Budget—South East				0
South East Total	202,953,478	24,029,535	29,258,156	256,241,169
Devon and Cornwall	50,581,051	6,829,575	6,510,514	63,921,140
Somerset	16,731,352	1,390,494	3,617,476	21,739,322
Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole	18,123,058	2,825,082	2,009,599	22,957,739
West of England	37,539,261	2,438,197	2,161,025	42,138,483
Wiltshire and Swindon	16,308,000	1,724,101	1,112,386	19,144,487
Gloucestershire	13,829,027	1,837,789	2,746,411	18,413,227
Regional Budget—South West				0
South West Total	153,111,749	17,045,238	18,157,411	188,314,398
Shropshire	13,771,361	5,604,524	1,050,733	20,426,618
Staffordshire	35,333,725	4,865,306	3,605,596	43,804,627
Black Country	44,434,141	4,577,219	6,011,062	55,022,422
Birmingham and Solihull	82,482,484	4,835,478	6,502,855	93,820,817
Herefordshire and Worcestershire	20,458,371	2,623,052	953,026	24,034,449
Coventry and Warwickshire	32,967,245	3,158,085	5,080,851	41,206,181
Regional Budget—West Midlands				0
West Midlands Total	229,447,327	25,663,664	23,204,123	278,315,114
North Yorkshire	17,948,819	2,392,078	3,077,223	23,418,120
West Yorkshire	73,184,533	6,462,091	7,672,248	87,318,872
South Yorkshire	44,809,370	5,223,684	4,119,027	54,152,081
Humberside	32,006,135	3,077,900	4,083,006	39,167,041

LSC Name	2003/04 Allocation FE	WBL (19+)	ACL	Total
Regional Budget—Yorkshire & Humberside				0
Yorkshire & Humberside Total	167,948,857	17,155,753	18,951,504	204,056,114
National Contracting Service	0	19,748,933	0	
	1,756,226,518	200,790,560	227,275,491	2,164,543,736

LSC Name	2004/05 Allocation FE	WBL (19+)	ACL	Total
Norfolk	18,597,748	2,577,472	2,378,488	23,553,708
Cambridgeshire	18,840,300	2,642,018	2,517,813	24,000,131
Suffolk	15,625,277	3,209,003	2,834,436	21,668,716
Bedfordshire and Luton	20,674,000	1,388,856	1,941,481	24,004,337
Hertfordshire	23,785,434	2,894,867	2,946,360	29,626,661
Essex	31,919,325	3,996,808	7,671,588	43,587,721
Regional Budget—East of England				0
East of England Total	129,442,084	16,709,024	20,290,166	166,441,274
Derbyshire	31,530,715	3,922,506	6,244,794	41,698,015
Nottinghamshire	47,160,881	5,457,695	3,794,823	56,413,399
Lincolnshire and Rutland	14,690,955	2,925,478	2,464,911	20,081,344
Leicestershire	40,281,977	3,079,758	6,464,205	49,825,940
Northamptonshire	14,984,652	2,713,267	2,285,598	19,983,517
Regional Budget—East Midlands				0
East Midlands Total	148,649,180	18,098,704	21,254,331	188,002,215
London North	55,905,370	2,104,756	5,202,180	63,212,306
London West	60,906,749	2,584,523	7,146,533	70,637,805
London Central	123,049,936	4,920,764	12,551,168	140,521,868
London East	120,663,295	3,101,449	16,345,420	140,110,164
London South	52,072,024	4,035,401	7,756,336	63,863,761
Regional Budget—Greater London				0
Greater London Total	412,597,374	16,746,893	49,001,637	478,345,904
Northumberland	7,361,877	1,245,000	503,565	9,110,442
Tyne and Wear	58,478,806	3,570,000	5,586,983	67,635,789
County Durham	19,120,012	1,988,000	2,404,457	23,512,469
Tees Valley	27,185,009	3,657,000	4,471,093	35,313,102
Regional Budget—North East				0
North East Total	112,145,704	10,460,000	12,966,098	135,571,802
Cumbria	12,493,547	1,924,759	1,684,384	16,102,690
Lancashire	52,371,000	5,104,629	9,003,261	66,478,890
Greater Merseyside	57,783,962	8,402,182	9,101,803	75,287,947
Greater Manchester	95,189,660	12,157,667	14,669,938	122,017,265
Cheshire and Warrington	24,069,864	4,114,892	2,489,792	30,674,548
Regional Budget—North West				0
North West Total	241,908,033	31,704,129	36,949,178	310,561,340
MKOB	35,620,654	7,098,404	5,803,101	48,522,159
Berkshire	25,417,860	4,530,508	3,723,248	33,671,616
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	47,880,510	6,906,564	3,146,465	57,933,539
Surrey	24,647,296	2,203,198	3,867,629	30,718,123
Sussex	40,754,000	4,827,932	4,760,137	50,342,069
Kent and Medway	39,275,000	4,646,469	8,488,329	52,409,798
Regional Budget—South East				0
South East Total	213,595,320	30,213,075	29,788,909	273,597,304
Devon and Cornwall	52,665,397	7,517,714	6,624,841	66,807,952
Somerset	17,190,677	1,572,974	3,618,569	22,382,220
Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole	19,512,489	3,201,500	2,079,617	24,793,606
West of England	40,121,859	2,670,000	2,371,258	45,163,117
Wiltshire and Swindon	16,001,540	2,430,000	1,098,300	19,529,840
Gloucestershire	14,344,793	1,981,820	2,692,739	19,019,352
Regional Budget—South West				0
South West Total	159,836,755	19,374,008	18,485,324	197,696,087
Shropshire	14,410,580	1,678,277	1,014,644	17,103,501
Staffordshire	38,379,523	3,826,000	3,419,531	47,625,054
Black Country	45,526,650	5,296,439	6,101,301	56,924,390
Birmingham and Solihull	87,370,383	5,238,322	6,694,680	99,303,385

LSC Name	2004/05 Allocation FE	WBL (19+)	ACL	Total
Herefordshire and Worcestershire	22,607,078	3,571,716	1,027,009	27,205,803
Coventry and Warwickshire	36,683,124	3,600,270	5,218,631	45,502,025
Regional Budget—West Midlands				0
West Midlands Total	244,977,338	25,211,024	23,475,796	293,664,158
North Yorkshire	19,434,000	2,989,838	3,178,451	25,602,289
West Yorkshire	76,774,543	7,206,974	7,553,028	91,534,545
South Yorkshire	48,386,149	6,383,653	4,190,689	58,960,491
Humberside	33,657,087	2,802,753	4,142,383	40,602,223
Regional Budget—Yorkshire & Humberside				0
Yorkshire & Humberside Total	178,251,779	19,383,218	19,064,551	216,699,548
National Contracting Service	2,491,877	51,670,956	0	54,162,833
	1,843,895,444	239,571,031	231,275,990	2,314,742,465

LSC Name	2005/06 Allocation FE	WBL (19+)	ACL	Total
Norfolk	16,594,109	0	2,378,488	18,972,597
Cambridgeshire	16,632,800	0	2,517,813	19,150,613
Suffolk	13,670,734	0	2,834,436	16,505,170
Bedfordshire and Luton	18,748,754	0	1,941,481	20,690,235
Hertfordshire	21,403,338	0	2,946,360	24,349,698
Essex	27,696,593	0	7,671,588	35,368,181
Regional Budget—East of England		17,127,000		17,127,000
East of England Total	114,746,328	17,127,000	20,290,166	152,163,494
Derbyshire	30,175,779	3,580,000	6,244,794	40,000,573
Nottinghamshire	45,666,009	4,845,000	3,794,823	54,305,832
Lincolnshire and Rutland	11,536,418	2,290,000	2,464,911	16,291,329
Leicestershire	39,031,307	2,917,000	6,464,205	48,412,512
Northamptonshire	14,284,624	2,524,000	2,285,598	19,094,222
Regional Budget—East Midlands		0		0
East Midlands Total	140,694,137	16,156,000	21,254,331	178,104,468
London North	57,271,062	0	5,202,180	62,473,242
London West	63,099,000	0	7,146,533	70,245,533
London Central	123,183,676	0	12,551,168	135,734,844
London East	119,202,610	0	16,345,420	135,548,030
London South	52,146,317	0	7,756,336	59,902,653
Regional Budget—Greater London		17,165,000		17,165,000
Greater London Total	414,902,665	17,165,000	49,001,637	481,069,302
Northumberland	6,677,297	1,276,125	503,565	8,456,987
Tyne and Wear	54,689,000	3,659,250	5,586,983	63,935,233
County Durham	17,973,747	1,998,750	2,404,457	22,376,954
Tees Valley	26,872,556	3,748,425	4,471,093	35,092,074
Regional Budget—North East		−1,000		−1,000
North East Total	106,212,600	10,681,550	12,966,098	129,860,248
Cumbria	11,630,193	1,973,000	1,684,384	15,287,577
Lancashire	49,528,928	5,232,000	9,003,261	63,764,189
Greater Merseyside	57,190,952	8,611,000	9,101,803	74,903,755
Greater Manchester	91,005,613	12,463,000	14,669,938	118,138,551
Cheshire and Warrington	22,240,198	4,218,000	2,489,792	28,947,990
Regional Budget—North West				0
North West Total	231,595,884	32,497,000	36,949,178	301,042,062
MKOB	29,938,656	7,448,000	5,803,101	43,189,757
Berkshire	25,376,000	5,240,000	3,723,248	34,339,248
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	48,965,498	7,265,000	3,146,465	59,376,963
Surrey	22,869,714	2,844,000	3,867,629	29,581,343
Sussex	40,395,000	5,062,000	4,760,137	50,217,137
Kent and Medway	36,782,429	4,824,000	8,488,329	50,094,758
Regional Budget—South East		−1,715,000		−1,715,000
South East Total	204,327,297	30,968,000	29,788,909	265,084,206
Devon and Cornwall	49,849,761	5,066,802	6,624,841	61,541,404
Somerset	15,306,931	1,061,968	3,618,569	19,987,468
Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole	18,883,558	2,156,287	2,079,617	23,119,462
West of England	32,229,399	1,806,263	2,323,407	36,359,069

LSC Name	2005/06 Allocation FE	WBL (19+)	ACL	Total
Wiltshire and Swindon	14,852,309	1,627,607	1,098,300	17,578,216
Gloucestershire	12,864,753	1,330,301	2,692,739	16,887,793
Regional Budget—South West		6,809,772		6,809,772
South West Total	143,986,711	19,859,000	18,437,473	182,283,184
Shropshire	14,939,274		1,014,644	15,953,918
Staffordshire	36,008,000	0	3,419,531	39,427,531
Black Country	47,010,520	0	6,101,301	53,111,821
Birmingham and Solihull	90,037,855	0	6,694,680	96,732,535
Herefordshire and Worcestershire	23,102,474	0	1,227,009	24,329,483
Coventry and Warwickshire	36,616,416	0	5,218,631	41,835,047
Regional Budget—West Midlands		25,841,000		25,841,000
West Midlands Total	247,714,539	25,841,000	23,675,796	297,231,335
North Yorkshire	16,880,078	0	3,170,071	20,050,149
West Yorkshire	75,603,910	0	7,557,700	83,161,610
South Yorkshire	47,482,512	0	4,192,555	51,675,067
Humberside	31,684,376	0	4,144,225	35,828,601
Regional Budget—Yorkshire & Humberside		19,782,000		19,782,000
Yorkshire & Humberside Total	171,650,876	19,782,000	19,064,551	210,497,427
National Contracting Service	2,250,000	76,662,000	0	78,912,000
	1,778,081,037	266,738,550	231,428,139	2,276,247,726

Annex 2, Adult Participation
2003/04 actuals, 2004/05 planned

		2003/04 FE	WBL	ACL	Total
	National Employer Service	36,793	21,503	—	58,296
EE060	Norfolk	55,171	1,701	15,307	72,179
EE070	Cambridgeshire	39,864	1,338	13,248	54,450
EE080	Suffolk	27,914	1,607	17,313	46,834
EE090	Bedfordshire and Luton	49,236	813	10,785	60,834
EE100	Hertfordshire	38,314	1,665	4,217	44,196
EE110	Essex	55,658	2,039	32,855	90,552
EM010	Derbyshire	79,412	1,710	13,870	94,993
EM020	Nottinghamshire	99,087	2,555	13,918	115,560
EM030	Lincolnshire and Rutland	87,553	1,232	15,569	104,354
EM040	Leicestershire	77,012	1,361	25,029	103,402
EM050	Northamptonshire	29,437	1,450	14,861	45,748
GL120	London North	63,167	766	10,281	74,214
GL130	London West	59,295	830	26,394	86,519
GL140	London Central	151,908	1,744	40,750	194,402
GL150	London East	187,455	1,318	43,534	232,307
GL160	London South	73,273	1,802	31,637	106,712
NE170	Northumberland	9,097	588	4,178	13,863
NE180	Tyne and Wear	97,531	2,498	25,155	125,184
NE190	County Durham	40,481	932	6,693	48,106
NE200	Tees Valley	62,973	1,399	15,827	80,199
NW210	Cumbria	32,292	1,003	10,950	44,245
NW220	Lancashire	103,162	2,760	59,624	165,546
NW230	Greater Merseyside	99, 226	4,377	20,977	124,580
NW240	Greater Manchester	159,429	6,280	28,619	194,328
NW250	Cheshire and Warrington	53,207	2,364	18,445	74,016
SE260	Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire	64,206	2,734	46,500	113,439
SE270	Berkshire	36,091	1,986	19,302	57,378
SE280	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	130,446	2,874	28,610	161,930
SE290	Surrey	45,693	891	27,037	73,621
SE300	Sussex	64,372	2,104	55,660	122,136
SE310	Kent and Medway	86,652	2,148	34,284	123,083
SW320	Devon and Cornwall	118,982	4,009	45,174	168,165
SW330	Somerset	33,499	806	15,559	49,864
SW340	Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole	38,628	2,443	13,545	54,616
SW350	West of England	53,638	1,338	6,078	61,054
SW360	Wiltshire and Swindon	44,394	1,351	8,265	54,010
SW370	Gloucestershire	30,296	928	17,746	48,969
WM380	Shropshire	27,632	887	3,244	31,763
WM390	Staffordshire	74,910	2,416	22,152	99,478
WM400	Black Country	83,978	2,492	17,869	104,339
WM410	Birmingham and Solihull	124,760	1,875	15,183	141,818
WM420	Herefordshire and Worcestershire	59,254	1,638	1,000	61,892
WM430	Coventry and Warwickshire	74,708	1,534	8,400	84,642
YH440	North Yorkshire	55,918	1,395	13,696	71,010
YH450	West Yorkshire	133,304	3,739	28,610	165,652
YH460	South Yorkshire	81,921	2,409	12,000	96,330
YH470	Humberside	81,769	1,495	18,000	101,264
	TOTALS	3,413,000	111,125	977,950	4,502,075

		2004/05 FE	WBL	ACL	Total
	National Employer Service	36,793	23,204	—	59,997
EE060	Norfolk	49,908	1,726	16,000	67,634
EE070	Cambridgeshire	39,320	1,264	15,833	56,417
EE080	Suffolk	32,895	1,405	17,071	51,371
EE090	Bedfordshire and Luton	42,847	775	11,000	54,621
EE100	Hertfordshire	41,062	1,588	4,000	46,651
EE110	Essex	47,494	2,051	32,400	81,946
EM010	Derbyshire	78,954	1,702	15,425	96,081
EM020	Nottinghamshire	94,355	2,539	13,918	110,811
EM030	Lincolnshire and Rutland	37,393	1,130	13,430	51,954
EM040	Leicestershire	91,285	1,509	23,530	116,324
EM050	Northamptonshire	27,756	1,324	15,150	44,230
GL120	London North	64,012	820	10,525	75,357
GL130	London West	51,298	789	28,042	80,129
GL140	London Central	135,943	1,781	41,000	178,724
GL150	London East	190,182	1,212	50,572	241,965
GL160	London South	75,152	1,539	43,350	120,041
NE170	Northumberland	9,939	538	3,684	14,210
NE180	Tyne and Wear	111,463	2,181	20,569	134,213
NE190	County Durham	44,266	842	7,030	52,137
NE200	Tees Valley	55,964	1,330	13,251	70,545
NW210	Cumbria	31,149	951	10,950	43,050
NW220	Lancashire	99,821	2,927	59,624	162,372
NW230	Greater Merseyside	95,486	4,183	24,000	123,669
NW240	Greater Manchester	159,081	5,933	28,600	193,614
NW250	Cheshire and Warrington	45,137	2,499	17,800	65,436
SE260	Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire	63,001	2,616	34,000	99,617
SE270	Berkshire	42,158	2,024	20,000	64,183
SE280	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	109,024	3,034	28,610	140,668
SE290	Surrey	48,009	1,027	24,000	73,036
SE300	Sussex	63,081	2,268	50,690	116,039
SE310	Kent and Medway	75,989	2,248	36,150	114,387
SW320	Devon and Cornwall	114,748	3,735	52,648	171,131
SW330	Somerset	41,431	809	4,265	46,505
SW340	Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole	41,428	1,528	13,760	56,716
SW350	West of England	57,655	1,329	6,100	65,084
SW360	Wiltshire and Swindon	42,948	1,237	6,386	50,571
SW370	Gloucestershire	32,589	931	16,500	50,020
WM380	Shropshire	32,934	807	5,646	39,387
WM390	Staffordshire	77,091	2,268	29,650	109,010
WM400	Black Country	82,100	2,315	18,048	102,462
WM410	Birmingham and Solihull	135,401	2,037	15,183	152,621

		2004/05 FE	WBL	ACL	Total
WM420	Herefordshire and Worcestershire	43,732	1,598	1,000	46,330
WM430	Coventry and Warwickshire	69,612	1,538	9,400	80,550
YH440	North Yorkshire	53,765	1,422	13,696	68,882
YH450	West Yorkshire	126,541	3,600	25,822	155,963
YH460	South Yorkshire	79,676	2,098	12,000	93,774
YH470	Humberside	75,011	1,387	18,000	94,398
	TOTALS	3,296,927	109,597	978,308	4,384,832

Basic Skills Training

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate has been made of the number of 16 to 18-year-olds who are eligible for basic skills training; and what proportion have taken it up. [19205]

Jacqui Smith: The Department has not produced a detailed estimate of 16 to 18-year-olds eligible for and taking up basic skills training. However, the Department does collect separate data on achievements in English and Mathematics of 15-year-old school leavers and Skills for Life course enrolments for 16 to 18-year-olds.

In the academic year of 2003/04 56 per cent. of 15-year-olds left school with a level 2 GCSE (A*-C) qualification in English (table 1) and 50 per cent. in Mathematics (table 2).

Table 1: Number and percentage of GCSE achievements by 15-year-old pupils in English (2003/04)

	English GCSE A*-C		English GCSE D-G		English no qualification	
Academic year	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2003/04	359,250	56	226,737	35	57,573	9

Source:
These figures are based on data produced for, and checked by schools as part of, the Secondary School (GCSE and equivalent) Achievement and Attainment tables (formerly Performance tables).

Table 2: Number and percentage of GCSE achievements by 15-year-old pupils in Mathematics (2003/04)

	Mathematics GCSE A*-C		Mathematics GCSE D-G		Mathematics no qualification	
Academic year	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2003/04	318,874	50	266,002	41	58,698	9

Source:
These figures are based on data produced for, and checked by schools as part of, the Secondary School (GCSE and equivalent) Achievement and Attainment tables (formerly Performance tables).

Any young person who leaves school without a GCSE A*-C (Level 2 qualification) in English or Mathematics is eligible for a Skills for Life course. Skills for Life courses include a literacy or numeracy qualification up to level 2 (basic skills, GCSE's and key skills). In 2003/04 nearly 278,000 16 to 18-year-olds enrolled on a Skills for Life course (table 3).

Table 3: Number of 16 to 18-year-old learners taking up Skills for Life opportunities

	16 to 18-year-olds
2003/04	277,986

Source:
LSC ILR data, final 2003/04

In total, just over 621,000 courses in literacy and numeracy were enrolled upon by 16to 18-year-olds in 2003/04 (table 4 and 5).

Table 4: Number of Skills for Life learning opportunities taken up by 16 to 18-year-olds by course (2003/04)

Course	2003/04
Basic Skills	159,640
GCSE	77,103
Key Skills	422,903
Total	659,646

Source:
LSC ILR data, final 2003/04

Table 5: Number of Skills for Life learning opportunities taken up by 16–18 year olds by subject (2003/04)

Subject	2003/04
Literacy	314,905
Numeracy	306,170
ESOL	38,571
Total	659,646

Source:
LSC ILR data, final 2003/04

Black/Ethnic Minority Pupils

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the educational attainment of black and ethnic minority pupils in Liverpool in *(a)* primary, *(b)* secondary, *(c)* further and *(d)* higher education. [17847]

Jacqui Smith: Information on the educational attainment of pupils, broken down by ethnic origin in primary, secondary and further education for all local authorities is published on the Department's website. The information is available at http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000564/index.shtml

Information on the educational attainment of students from Liverpool in higher education is shown in the following table. The figures show that the proportion of graduates from Liverpool who are from ethnic minority groups is lower than for graduates from the rest of the country.

UK domiciled first degree students graduating from UK higher education institutions in 2003/04

	Students from Liverpool		Students from the rest of the UK	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total first degree graduates of which:	1,665	100.0	256,895	100.0
White	1,390	83.6	206,845	80.5
Black and ethnic minority groups	145	8.7	35,750	13.9
Other[1]	125	7.6	14,300	5.6

[1] Students who did not provide details of their ethnicity.

Note:

Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5, so components may not sum to totals; percentages have been rounded to 1 decimal place.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Key Stage Tests

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research her Department has undertaken on attainment at key stage 3 taking into account *(a)* gender, *(b)* social class, *(c)* racial or ethnic background, *(d)* eligibility for free schools meals and *(e)* location of school. [19200]

Jacqui Smith: Statistics on key stage 3 attainment by various pupil characteristics are published annually in a Statistical First Release (SFR). The 2004 key stage 3 information was made available on 30 September 2005 in additional information to the SFR entitled National Curriculum Assessment, GCSE and Equivalent Attainment and Post-16 Attainment by Pupil Characteristics, in England 2004. This is available at:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000564/index.shtml

Similar information can be found in The Statistics of Low Attaining Pupils bulletin which was published in June 2005 and is available at:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SBU/b000588/index.shtml

Teachers/Schools (Website Criticism)

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance she has issued to *(a)* teachers and *(b)* schools on steps they may take if they believe they have been unfairly criticised on the www.ratemyteachers.co.uk website; and if she will make a statement. [19092]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 18 October 2005]:* My right hon. Friend has not issued any guidance on this website. It is open to teachers and schools to seek their own professional advice on the steps available to them in response to criticism on this or any other website.

Teenage Mothers

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many women who have become pregnant or given birth before reaching the age of 16 years attained five GCSEs at grades A*-C in each of the last five years for which records are available. [17929]

Beverley Hughes: Data on births to mothers aged under 16 and data on educational attainment are reported separately, and only at an aggregate level. It is therefore not possible to provide exact figures on the educational attainment of teenage mothers.

However, other sources of data do show there is a strong relationship between poor educational attainment and teenage pregnancy. Data from the 2001 census show that 37 per cent. of mothers giving birth under the age of 19 had no educational qualifications, compared with a national average of around 10 per cent. for all young women. Aggregated data on teenage pregnancy rates and GCSE attainment also show that areas with high teenage pregnancy rates have poorer GCSE outcomes, even after taking account of deprivation.

Timber Procurement

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans her Department has to fund the maintenance of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [16279]

Bill Rammell: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer given by my hon. Friend Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 160W.

Under-age Drinking

Mr. Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures she is taking to reduce the incidence of under-age drinking among school pupils; and if she will make a statement. [18559]

Jacqui Smith: The statutory National Curriculum Science Order requires that all pupils should learn about the effects of alcohol and other drugs. In addition, schools are expected to use the non-statutory frameworks for Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship at key stages 1 and 2, PSHE at key stages 3 and 4 and the Citizenship programme of study at key stages 3 and 4 as the context for developing drug and alcohol education further. In 2004 all schools were issued with guidance on all aspects of drug education, including alcohol.

Since 1997, we have made over £70 million available to local education authorities to support drug, alcohol and tobacco education and prevention in schools. Over the last three years more than 3,000 teachers have undertaken the PSHE certificate which sets standards in the teaching of PSHE, including alcohol education.

Together with the Home Office and Department of Health, we are supporting a national five year research programme called "Blueprint" to test the effectiveness of drug education initiatives in schools. It will make a significant contribution to developing a UK evidence base for drug, alcohol and tobacco education.

TRANSPORT

2012 Olympics (Transport Access)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make it his policy to promote an additional access road for Canvey Island for use during the 2012 London Olympic games. [19052]

Ms Buck: There are no plans for an access road for Canvey Island for use during the 2012 London Olympic games, as it does not currently feature in Olympic plans as a venue and is not likely to be subject to significant additional traffic due to the Olympics.

Air Traffic Control (Computer Malfunction)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on how many occasions the National Air Traffic Control Service's computer has malfunctioned in the last three years. [19563]

Ms Buck: This is an operational matter for National Air Traffic Services Ltd. (NATS). I have asked the Chief Executive of NATS to write to the hon. Member.

Aircraft Flights (Buckinghamshire)

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the trend in the number of aircraft flights over Buckinghamshire during the last five years. [19304]

Ms Buck: None. The Future of Air Transport White Paper stated that air travel had increased five-fold over the past 30 years, and demand was projected to be between two and three times the current levels by 2030. There were no specific figures for Buckinghamshire or any other part of the UK.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the likely future trend in *(a)* the number of aircraft flights and *(b)* level of aircraft noise over Buckinghamshire during the next 10 years. [19305]

Ms Buck: No such estimates have been made.

Aviation Subsidies

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what aviation public service obligation subsidy applications have been received from the Welsh Assembly Government. [17968]

Ms Buck: The Department has recently agreed to support an application from the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) for a public service obligation (PSO) to be placed on a new air route between Cardiff and RAF Valley on Anglesey.

Officials are now working with WAG to take forwards the PSO process with the European Commission.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* airlines and *(b)* routes receive public service obligation subsidies in the United Kingdom. [17969]

Ms Buck: At present, two airlines operate services which receive public service obligation (PSO) subsidies. They currently operate 15 routes within Scotland.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on public service obligations subsidies to airlines in the United Kingdom. [17970]

Ms Buck: The imposition of public service obligations (PSOs) is governed by European legislation laid out in Regulation 2408/92. This regulation sets out a number of criteria which must be met in order for a PSO to be imposed.

Applications to create a PSO are considered by the Department for Transport against these criteria. The Secretary of State then decides whether to impose a PSO on that route. The only PSOs currently in operation are in support of 15 lifeline air services to remote communities in Scotland.

Bus Lanes

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of priority bus lanes have been created in Southend since 1997. [19998]

Ms Buck: Southend borough council has not installed any priority bus lanes since 1997. The borough council has implemented a range of other bus priority measures including real time bus information displays at bus stops, bus priority at junctions and improved interchange facilities.

Civil Aircraft Noise

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his policy is on the monitoring of the compliance of civil aircraft noise levels with international noise certification standards. [19303]

Ms Buck: Aircraft operating into the UK have to comply with noise standards agreed through the International Civil Aviation Organisation. Compliance for those aircraft on the UK register will be verified by the Civil Aviation Authority; for non-UK aircraft it will be by the state of registry. Airports may seek information from airlines on the noise certification status of aircraft in the event of uncertainty.

Cleaner Fuels

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what action is being taken to increase the use of cleaner alternative fuels to reduce carbon emissions. [19606]

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what action he is taking to secure increased use of cleaner alternative fuels. [19607]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government support the use of clean, low carbon fuels primarily by means of fuel duty incentives. The rationale for decisions on the level of Government support for different fuels is set out in the Alternative Fuels Framework published in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's 2003 pre-Budget report. We have also been considering whether some form of Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation might be an

appropriate means of increasing the use of renewable fuels in the transport sector. We are due to publish a detailed feasibility study on this shortly.

In addition, this Department has recently launched a new grant programme to help meet some of the additional costs of installing refuelling infrastructure for certain clean alternative fuels, the details of which are available via www.est.org.uk/fleet

Coastguard Services

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent on coastguard services in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* the UK in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [20000]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is as follows.

£

	Essex	*UK*
1999	1,020,204	28,892,893
2000	1,036,381	32,031,655
2001	1,111,544	33,390,008
2002	1,212,651	34,473,643
2003	1,350,647	35,639,554
2004	1,375,103	39,108,456

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) was formed in 1998 and information is only available from 1999.

Departmental Vehicles

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many vehicles for which the Department is responsible are fitted with retreaded tyres. [17980]

Ms Buck: Of the vehicles which the Department is responsible, 15 have been fitted with retreaded tyres.

For information on the use of retread tyres in vehicles provided to the Department by the Government Car and Despatch Agency I refer the hon. Member to the letter of 11 October 2005 which he received from the Chief Executive of the GCDA, reference UIN15087 and UIN15088. Copies of this letter are available in the Library.

Driving (Right-hand Side)

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will undertake a study into the advantages and disadvantages of driving on the right-hand side of the road. [19324]

Dr. Ladyman: There are no plans to undertake such a study. A study of the implications of changing to driving on the right was considered some time ago and was rejected on both safety and cost grounds.

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent representations he has received in favour of driving on the right-hand side of the road. [19325]

Dr. Ladyman: None.

First Class Rail Fares

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment the Government have made of the level of take-up of first class rail fares by *(a)* private and *(b)* corporate customers. [19080]

Derek Twigg: Data on the nature of travel for every first class rail journey are not held centrally by the Department. We are aware that the majority of first class corporate travel takes place at the full, flexible fare. The national Rail Travel Survey to be launched by the Rail Passengers Council under the Railways Act 2005 will capture the business/leisure split in future years.

An analysis of ticket types sold in the year to August 2006 shows that 75.4 per cent. of first class travel was full open fare type, compared to 24.6 per cent. of advance purchase, Apex and other promotional fare offers.

Free Travel

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the annual percentage increase in the number of passengers using buses following the introduction on 1 April 2006 of free travel for those aged 60 years and above; and if he will make a statement. [18503]

Ms Buck: The Government's initial estimate is that between 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2007, bus patronage in England will grow by 5.6 per cent.

Impounded Vehicles

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many cars were impounded by each London borough in each year since 1997; and what the cost was to each borough in each year. [15832]

Ms Buck: Since 3 July 2000, the Mayor has had overall responsibility for traffic management in London. However, responsibility for parking enforcement in London, generally rests with the relevant local authority. London boroughs employ parking attendants to enforce parking controls on all the roads for which they are the highway authority.

The Government do not hold this information. However, the Association of London Government's Transport and Environment Committee (ALGTEC) co-ordinate parking enforcement on behalf of the London boroughs and compile parking statistics. Their address is:

Transport & Environment Committee
Association of London Government
New Zealand House
80 Haymarket
London
SW1Y4TE

Midland Mainline

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the likely impact on Midland Mainline services out of St. Pancras of train traffic to the London 2012 Olympic village. [18488]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* The impact of train traffic to the London 2012 Olympic village upon Midland Mainline services out of St. Pancras is expected to be minimal. St. Pancras stations' major role in the Olympic transport plans is as a terminus for the Olympic Javelin service, which will provide a regular service direct to Stratford with a journey time of approximately seven minutes. Midland Mainline passengers will have an excellent interchange with the Javelin service at the new St. Pancras station, for onward journeys to Stratford.

Motorways

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many sites there are on the motorway and trunk road network marked with chevrons designed to ensure motorists keep their distance from the car in front; and what their locations are. [19996]

Dr. Ladyman: There are at present chevron markings at six sites:

M1—southbound from Watford Gap services to just before junction 16;

M5—between junctions 22 and 21 northbound carriageway;

M6—junction 12–14 westbound and eastbound carriageways;

M6—junction 18–19 northbound and southbound carriageways;

M6—junction 32–33 southbound carriageway;

M62—between junctions 23 and 22 westbound carriageway.

In addition to the above sites works are currently in progress to install chevron markings on the southbound section of the M11 in Essex between junctions 9 and 8. This scheme is due for completion on 4 November 2005.

Powered Wheelchairs/Scooters

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received about the sale of mini-motorcycles and powered scooters to minors; and if he will make a statement. [19336]

Dr. Ladyman: None, although we have received some representations from concerned members of the public about nuisance and road safety issues arising when such vehicles are ridden by children or adults on the public highway.

In the Department's view it is illegal to use vehicles not compliant with road traffic law on the public highway. It is for the courts to provide an authoritative interpretation of the law, and two High Court judgements have confirmed miniature motor scooters to be motor vehicles within the meaning of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended. We believe it likely that a similar judgement could be made on other vehicles, such as miniature motorcycles, should a court case arise.

Powered vehicles on the public highway must meet relevant construction requirements and be registered, taxed, insured etc. Drivers/riders must hold an appropriate licence and where necessary wear a suitable helmet. Enforcement of road traffic law is a matter for individual chief officers of police. In addition police forces can counter irresponsible use with powers under the Police Reform Act 2002 to seize vehicles being driven in a careless and inconsiderate manner or off-road without consent and in a way which causes alarm, distress or annoyance to members of the public.

I understand that the packaging on powered items such as miniature motorcycles or scooters generally includes a warning that they are not for highway use. However it may be that, once such packaging is discarded, this is overlooked or ignored. My Department and the Home Office have both issued guidance on our websites to remind the public about responsible use of these vehicles and possible penalties for mis-use.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to publish the results of his Department's review of laws governing the use of powered wheelchairs and scooters on the highway. [20149]

Ms Buck: The review has now been completed. We are considering the recommendations made in the final report and we hope to publish it before the end of this year.

Railways

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received regarding the award for the Integrated Kent Franchise. [18258]

Derek Twigg: Around 100 letters about proposed service patterns and other aspects of the Department's franchise specification have been received from local organisations, councils or MPs since January 2004. Ministers have met Kent MPs to discuss these issues on several occasions. Over the same period, around 1,280 letters on the subject of the Integrated Kent Franchise were dealt with by the Strategic Rail Authority, principally from members of the public.

The Department has also received around 140 letters from local organisations, councils or MPs, supported by a postcard campaign, on the related issue of South Eastern Trains being retained in the public sector.

Kelvin Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) for what percentage of stations on the rail network plans have been approved for the renovation to make them accessible to wheelchairs and people with reduced mobility; [15105]

(2) how many stations on the rail network are not accessible to wheelchairs and people with reduced mobility; [15106]

(3) what estimate has been made of the number of disabled people and people with reduced mobility who are unable to make journeys on the rail network because their local station is not accessible; [15107]

(4) what steps are being taken to improve accessibility to stations on the rail network for wheelchairs and people with reduced mobility. [15108]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport does not hold the information requested.

Under Part 3 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 station operators, like other service providers, are required to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled people do not find it impossible or unreasonably difficult to access their services. Operators are responding to those duties.

Accessibility improvements are being delivered by different mechanisms such as franchising, major projects, investment in rolling stock and maintenance and renewal of the rail network. Over half of railway journeys currently originate from step-free stations. The Government have also announced a ring-fenced fund—the Access for All Fund—to deliver £370 million worth of station access improvements across the network over the next 10 years. The fund was announced at the launch of the consultation on the Strategic Railway Authority's (SRA) draft Railways for All Strategy on how best to make the railway more accessible. We plan to publish the final Strategy which will establish priorities for the Access for All fund around the end of this year.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions his Department has had with the association of train operating companies on encouraging train use by passengers, with particular reference to Gravesham. [19830]

Derek Twigg: I have not had any specific discussions regarding rail usage in Gravesham with ATOC. In order to encourage off peak travel into London and Kent, South Eastern trains and other train operating companies, in association with ATOC, have recently teamed up with a number of major tourist attractions to offer special deals to those travelling by train.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on how many occasions road transport replaced trains between Swindon and Gloucester or Cheltenham in the most recent year for which figures are available. [18952]

Derek Twigg: In the year to 13 October 2005 road transport replaced trains between Swindon and Gloucester or Cheltenham on 33 days for planned engineering works. The Department for Transport does not keep records of the number of occasions on which road transport replaces trains on an unplanned basis.

Road Traffic Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the operation of section 75 of the Road Traffic Act 1988. [20105]

Dr. Ladyman: Section 75 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 is a road safety and consumer protection measure to deter the sale of unroadworthy vehicles to unsuspecting purchasers. It also makes it an offence for anyone to alter a vehicle so as to make it unroadworthy, for example, by carrying out poor quality repairs. Trading Standards officers are primarily responsible for enforcing the provisions of section 75 and offenders can be fined up to £5,000.

Second Severn Bridge

Jessica Morden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the construction costs of the second Severn bridge will be met; and what the outstanding debt on the crossing is. [19212]

Dr. Ladyman: The concession agreement and the legislation governing the Severn river crossing provides for the concessionaire to charge tolls for using the existing bridge and the new bridge (from its opening to the public in 1996) for a period of 30 years or until the concessionaire has realised costs associated with the construction of the new bridge—whichever occurs first. Current estimates are that costs will be realised in 2016.

As at 31 December 2004, the outstanding debt was £443,361,000. This figure is not just construction costs for the second Severn bridge but also original debt, maintenance, operational and finance costs associated with both Severn bridges.

Stonehenge

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will announce the arrangements for his review of the alternative options for the Stonehenge A303 Road Improvement scheme, including a timetable for the review. [19401]

Dr. Ladyman: We expect to be in a position to make an announcement by the end of October 2005 on the terms of reference and management arrangements, including the timetable, for taking forward the review of the A303 Stonehenge scheme.

Traffic Cones

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will arrange for different colour cones to be used to mark the approach of a junction and the end of the temporary lane on major highways where long lines of traffic cones are used to delineate temporary lanes. [19788]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government have no current plans to amend the Traffic Signs Regulations and general Directions 2002 to allow the use of different coloured cones (road works delineators) to mark the approach of junctions in major roadworks.

The Secretary of State has recently approved the use of sequentially flashing cone lamps to improve the visibility of cones at the taper positions. The Highways Agency continues to investigate innovative ways to improve cones, barriers, signing and marking at roadworks.

Transport (Gravesham)

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of transport infrastructure needs in Gravesham. [19828]

Ms Buck: Local transport infrastructure requirements are assessed by the relevant local transport authority. In the case of Gravesham, this responsibility lies with Kent county council. Kent county council submitted a draft five-year Local transport plan to the Department in July this year. DfT officials are currently examining the plan and Kent county council aim to provide a finalised plan by March2006.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what account his Department takes of the protection of *(a)* historic homes and *(b)* forests in (i) Gravesham and (ii) England in approving the construction of (A) new railways and (B) other transport infrastructure. [19829]

Ms Buck: The department evaluates transport and infrastructure projects in Gravesham and across England using the NATA (new approach to appraisal)

process. As part of this process, local authorities are asked to appraise their transport plans against an environment objective which in turn includes landscape, biodiversity and heritage/historic resources sub-objectives.

HEALTH

Age Barriers

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of NHS facilities which operate an explicit age bar to treatment. [16983]

Mr. Byrne: The 2002 cross-cutting review on health inequalities recognised age as one dimension of tackling health inequalities. "Better Health in Old Age" published in November 2004, helped to ensure that people are treated on the basis of their needs, rather than their age. There has been a major increase in elective surgery for most old-age related needs and there is now a wider appreciation and awareness across health and social care of age discrimination as an issue. Action is being taken at a local level and national health service organisations have been advised to check their written policies to ensure they have no age bias.

Agenda for Change

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received regarding funding for healthcare in East Sussex for the period 2005 to 2010; and what proportion of this funding will be spent on the NHS Agenda for Change. [17287]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* I am not aware of any representations on healthcare funding in East Sussex. The Department does not collect information on the future spend in individual national health service organisations on Agenda for Change. These costs will vary depending on the size and composition of the work force.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received regarding the implementation of the NHS Agenda for Change at the East Sussex hospitals NHS trust. [17288]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* I am aware of correspondence to my right hon. Friend, the former Secretary of State for Health (Dr. Reid), in February 2005 about the funding and implementation of "Agenda for Change" in the East Sussex hospitals national health service trust. I understand that, while recognising the challenges for organisations, the response pointed to the huge investment of around £1 billion by 2005–06 to meet the costs of implementing "Agenda for Change" that has been provided for in NHS local budgets.

The NHS Employers organisation provides support directly, where necessary, to individual hospital and primary care trusts on implementation issues.

Alliance Medical

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 5 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 2811W, on Alliance Medical, whether the capacity planning exercise conducted with strategic health authorities in 2004 took into consideration underused existing capacity in the NHS; and what the cost was of the exercise. [18883]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* The capacity planning exercise was to establish what additional capacity was required to deliver the Department's public service agreement targets. Assessment of the utilisation of existing national health service capacity is a matter for strategic health authorities (SHAs), which are responsible for working with commissioners and providers in local health economies to ensure that existing NHS diagnostic capacity is used to its full potential.

The costs of the capacity planning exercise in 2004 were mainly the time of the staff concerned in the Department, SHAs, and primary care trusts (PCTs). This information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 4 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 2810W, on Alliance Medical, what assessment she has made of the compatibility of the additionality rule with labour laws which will make it illegal to prevent someone working for whoever they choose; and how the rule is enforced. [18162]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* The additionality policy was created after careful consideration of the need to balance the safe guarding of national health service staff resources, in view of the shortages of certain specialists, doctors and nurses, and the rights of individuals to pursue freely their trade and profession. The Department examined all employment and related legislation and the additionality policy is fully compliant with these laws and is enforceable.

Ambulance Services

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had on the report A Strategic Review of the Provision and Commissioning of Ambulance Services across Cheshire and Merseyside; and what steps her Department is taking to implement the report. [19625]

Mr. Byrne: Departmental officials have received a copy of the report arising from this review. However, departmental officials have not held any formal discussions with regard to implementation. This is a matter for the Cheshire and Merseyside strategic health authority who are working with the Mersey regional ambulance service with regard to the recommendations contained in the report and how they might be implemented.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to improve the standard of care available to those with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder. [18346]

Mr. Byrne: In 2000, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) published guidance on the use of Methylphenidate in treating attention deficit

hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). NICE is currently reviewing this guidance in the wider context of other pharmacological and physiological interventions in children, young people and adults with ADHD.

The national service framework for children, young people and maternity services, which was published in September 2004, mapped out the improvement which we expect to see in child and adolescent mental health services over the next decade. Early in 2006, we will publish an exemplar which will illustrate a care pathway for a child suffering ADHD, which will demonstrate good practice and assist in the planning of effective services.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many finished consultant episodes of care for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder there have been in each year since 1997. [18347]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table.

Finished consultant episodes (FCEs) with a primary psychiatric diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ICD-10 code F90), by gender, England, 1996–97 to 2003–04[1]

	Gender		
	Male	*Female*	*All FCEs*
2003–04[1]	210	30	240
2002–03	200	40	230
2001–02	240	40	280
2000–01	220	50	270
1999–2000	180	40	220
1998–99	170	40	210
1997–98	150	30	180
1996–97	110	30	140

[1] Data has not been adjusted for shortfalls in data, i.e. the data are ungrossed.

Notes:

1. ICD-10 Code F90 includes disturbance of activity and attention (F90.0) and hyperkinetic disorder (F90.1), and hyperkinetic disorder other/NOS (F90.8/F90.9).
2. Disclosure rules apply due to the sensitive nature of the data; therefore, figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.
3. A FCE is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one health care provider. The figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.

Source:

Hospital episode statistics, National Health Service Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prescriptions of Ritalin have been issued in each of the last five years. [18856]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is shown in the following table. The figures are taken from the prescription cost analysis from the Prescription Pricing Authority.

	[illegible]
2000	181
2001	180
2002	162
2003	124
2004	68

Autism

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many diagnoses have been made of autism spectrum disorders in each of the last five years for which figures are available; [17801]

(2) what data her Department collects on levels of autism in the adult population; [17802]

(3) how many children under the age of eight have been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders in each of the last five years. [17824]

Mr. Byrne: Diagnoses of autistic spectrum disorders (ADSs) within hospitals are available from hospital episode statistics (HES). These are shown in the table.

Number of finished consultant episodes involving a diagnosis of ASD[1]*, by age at end of episode, England, 1999–2000 to 2003–04*

	Age at end of episode			
	16 and under	*Over 16*	*Unknown*	*All diagnoses*
2003–04	5,780	2,360	10	8,150
2002–03	5,630	2,320	0	7,950
2001–02	5,180	2,100	0	7,280
2000–01	4,980	1,750	10	6,730
1999–2000	4,200	1,490	0	5,680

[1] ASDs include childhood autism, atypical autism, Asperger's syndrome, Rett's syndrome and other less common ASDs.

Source:

HES, national health service health and social care information centre.

The Department does not collect data centrally on the levels of autism in the adult population, nor does it collect information on the diagnosis of children under the age of eight.

The Medical Research Council's "Review of Autism Research: Epidemiology and Causes, (2001) suggests that":

> "... there appears fairly good agreement that autism spectrum disorders affect approximately 60, and more narrowly defined autism 10–30, per 10,000 children under eight".

It also suggests that the prevalence in autism in the adult population is not known.

Biopsy Specimens

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number and percentage of biopsy specimens mislaid within the national health service in the last year for which figures are available. [17579]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not collect this information centrally.

Births

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many babies weighing 8.8lbs or more were born in England in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [17827]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Dr. Vincent Cable, dated 20 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many babies weighing 8.81b or more were born in England in each of the last five years for which figures are available. (17827)

Birthweight figures are routinely published in metric weights. Figures for live born babies weighing 4,000g or more born to women resident in England 2000–04 are given in the attached table.

Live born babies by selected birthweight to women resident in England, 2000–04[1]

	Live births weighing 4,000g or more	*All live births with a stated birthweight*
2000	64,381	571,844
2001	62,770	562,886
2002	62,156	564,823
2003	64,648	588,952
2004[1]	66,941	606,070

[1] Provisional

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many cases of shoulder dystocia were recorded in births of children weighing more than 8.8lbs in each of the last five years for which figures are available; [17822]

(2) how many cases of cephalopelvic disproportion were recorded in births of childen weighing more than 8.8lbs in each of the last five years for which figures are available; [17823]

(3) how many babies weighing *(a)* 8.8lbs or more, *(b)* 5.9lbs to 8.7lbs and *(c)* less than 5.8lbs died as a direct result of complications during birth in each of the last five years for which figures are available; [17826]

(4) whether she plans to introduce standard NHS guidelines for the delivery of babies weighing more than 8.8lbs; and if she will make a statement; [17931]

(5) what discussions she has held with *(a)* the Royal College of Gynaecologists and *(b)* other professional bodies about the development of protocols for very large babies delivered in NHS maternity wards. [18173]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the number of cases of shoulder dystocia and cephalopelvic disproportion in births of children weighing more than 8.8lbs. is not collected centrally.

Information on the number of babies weighing 8.8lbs. or more, 5.9lbs. to 8.7lbs. and less than 5.8lbs., who died as a direct result of complications during birth, is not collected centrally.

I have not held any discussions with the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists or other professional bodies about the development of protocols for the delivery of very large babies.

I currently have no plans to introduce standard national health service guidelines for the delivery of babies weighing more than 8.8lbs. Current evidence suggests identification of "large for gestation" babies, even with the advent of ultrasound scanning, has large margins of error. Current evidence also suggests management of "expected/suspected" babies of larger than 4000 grams, or larger than 8lb. 14 oz., shows no significant difference in actual morbidity and mortality of babies, whether labour is induced, spontaneous or elective caesarean section.

Maternity clinical risk management standards have been developed by the NHS Litigation Authority, which administers the clinical negligence scheme for trusts. The standards include training for and management reporting of shoulder dystocia and have been fully endorsed by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and the Royal College of Midwives.

Blindness (Rehabilitation Workers)

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what short-term contingency measures are being implemented to address deficiencies in the number of qualified rehabilitation workers who assist blind and partially sighted people in England. [18397]

Mr. Byrne: Rehabilitation services for blind and partially sighted people are provided by local health and social care bodies. It is for those organisations to commission appropriate services based on local need. This would include the number, training and composition of teams available to provide rehabilitation for blind and partially sighted people.

Breast Cancer

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what discussions her Department has had with *(a)* Trafford Healthcare NHS Trust and *(b)* Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority regarding the provision of local breast care services for the residents of Altrincham and Sale; [17510]

(2) what representations she has received on the closure of the breast care service at Trafford General Hospital. [17511]

Mr. Byrne: None. Ministers have so far only received one letter concerning this matter.

Burns Review

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she intends to announce the findings of the Burns Care Review. [17293]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* The National Burn Care Group reported in 2001 and made many recommendations for how this care could be improved. The work now under way is designed to implement the recommendations in particular how burns services should be stratified. This is a complex exercise being undertaken by the national health service. The need to ensure a transparent and evidence-based process has required a greater level of analysis and discussion with burns services than originally envisaged. The options sub-group of the national burn care group are not now anticipating making recommendations before spring 2006 with a public consultation likely in summer 2006.

Cataract Units

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people are expected to be treated at the independent treatment cataract units in *(a)* Oxfordshire and *(b)* England in the first year of operation. [17417]

Mr. Byrne: The service commenced in February 2004 for the mobile cataract units and is still operational. During the first year of operation (February 2004 to January 2005) over 10,776 patients received speedier service due to the additional capacity delivered through this contract, none of which were in Oxfordshire.

The mobile cataract units expected to perform 12,999 procedures in the first year of Operation, none of which are expected to be delivered in Oxfordshire.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether there are plans to renew Netcare's contract to provide independent treatment scheme cataract units. [17418]

Mr. Byrne: The current contract with Netcare for the provision of cataract procedures via two mobile units is for five years. The decision about whether to renew this contract will be decided at a later date.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the performance of independent treatment scheme cataract units will be assessed as part of trusts' performance targets. [17419]

Mr. Byrne: Independent sector treatment centres are separate organisations to national health service trusts and therefore their performance is judged separately through contract management.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much it has cost on average to treat a patient at independent treatment scheme cataract units in *(a)* Oxfordshire and *(b)* England since they were established. [17459]

Mr. Byrne: The average cost of a cataract procedure cannot be disclosed as the information is commercial in confidence. The contract represents good value for money, being substantially less than the national health service equivalent cost.

Coeliac Disease

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to improve rates of diagnosis of coeliac disease; what steps she is taking to improve the standard of care given to those with coeliac disease; and how many people have been diagnosed as having coeliac disease in each year since 1997. [18361]

Mr. Byrne: Data on the incidence of coeliac disease is not available centrally though Coeliac UK estimates that the condition affects one per cent. of the United Kingdom population.

It is the role of primary care trusts (PCTs) in partnership with local stakeholders to decide what services to provide for their populations, including those with coeliac disease. They are best placed to understand local health care needs and commission appropriate services to meet them.

Strategic health authorities and PCTs have all received the national service framework (NSF) for long-term conditions. While the NSF is principally concerned with improving health and social care services for people with a long-term neurological condition, it will address issues common to all people with a long-term condition to improve their quality of life and promote independence.

Communications Difficulties

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to ensure that those who have difficulty communicating with others are able to access the communication aids they need. [18349]

Mr. Byrne: The Department sets targets for councils and primary care trusts to integrate their community equipment services and in April 2005, 98 per cent. of services were integrated with their partners. This high degree of integration should allow local partners to provide a cohesive response to people with communication difficulties who are assessed as requiring equipment.

Providing appropriate communication aids for people with speech impairments is clearly an important part of meeting the needs of an individual. Local service providers undertake the assessment of an individual's needs. It is the service provider's responsibility to ensure that the person has access to the communication aids and equipment to meet their assessed need.

Cystic Fibrosis

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many researchers have been funded by her Department for the purpose of finding a cure for cystic fibrosis; and at what cost in the last five years. [17998]

Mr. Byrne: The Department provided £1.3 million to support research into a gene therapy treatment for cystic fibrosis involving 31 researchers in two research groups.

Down's Syndrome

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average life expectancy is of people with Down's syndrome; and what estimate she has made of the average total cost of health care for each person with Down's syndrome over their whole lifetime. [18313]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested on life expectancy and the average total cost of health care is not held centrally.

General Practitioners

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioners are making referrals using the choose and book system. [17024]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not centrally collected. However, over 80 percent. (25,679) of general practitioners are currently registered to use choose and book and about 760 general practitioner practices are making referrals using the choose and book system.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Department has established a recommended charging scale for work undertaken by GPs when filling out forms for patients referred by private insurance companies. [17021]

Mr. Byrne: There is a list of prescribed medical certificates at Schedule 4 in the national health service general medical service Contracts Regulations 2005, which the general practitioner must provide free of charge under the NHS. All other certificates, including filling out forms for patients referred by private

insurance companies, are undertaken as private work and the GP can charge a fee, the level of which is a matter between doctor and patient.

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what recent estimate her Department has made of the number of deaths caused by misdiagnosis by general practitioners; and if she will make a statement; [16553]

(2) what steps her Department is taking to minimise the risks to patients' lives of misdiagnosis by general practitioners; and if she will make a statement. [16554]

Jane Kennedy: The Department does not routinely collect information centrally about misdiagnosis by general practitioners. However, the Government established the National Patient Safety Agency in July 2001 to improve the safety of national health service patient care and to set up a national reporting and learning system (NRLS) for adverse events. This system has now been rolled out across the NHS.

No cases have been reported to the NRLS to date where the patient died as a result of misdiagnosis reported to the NRLS. However, the NRLS has received only a relatively small number of incidents from primary care. Two deaths have been reported where there was a delay in diagnosis, one as a result of delay on the part of the patient.

GPs are expected to learn in training the skills needed to deal with all their patients, including effective diagnosis. Government do not specify the content of the GP training curriculum. This is the job of the Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board (PMETB), which is the competent authority for postgraduate medical training in the United Kingdom. PMETB is an independent professional body.

Regulations specify seven competencies which must be tested and which the curriculum must therefore teach:

factual medical knowledge sufficient to enable the doctor to perform the duties of a GP.

the ability to apply factual medical knowledge to the management of problems presented by patients in general practice.

effective communication, both orally and in writing.

the ability to consult satisfactorily with general practice patients.

the ability to review and critically analyze the practitioner's own working practices and to manage any necessary changes appropriately.

clinical skills.

the ability to synthesize all of the above competencies and apply them appropriately in a general practice setting.

All GPs are also subject to annual appraisal. This involves the GP discussing their practice with a trained appraiser against the headings of the General Medical Council's (GMC) "Good Medical Practice" guidance. Agreed areas for improvement are taken forward into a personal development plan which informs the doctor's training and development, which is reviewed over the following year. More serious concerns are dealt with outside of this process through a number of local and national arrangements, including retraining or reference to the GMC.

Hearing Aids

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS hospitals have waiting lists for digital hearing aids of over *(a)* six months, *(b)* one year and *(c)* two years. [18175]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not held centrally.

Hospital Closures

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many responses the West Suffolk Primary Care Trust received to its consultation document into the closure of the Walnuttree and St. Leonard's hospitals in Sudbury; and if she will publish them. [17697]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not held centrally and can be obtained from the West Suffolk Primary Care Trust.

Hypertension

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to improve the care given to those with hypertension; and what steps she is taking to encourage self-monitoring of blood pressure. [18352]

Mr. Byrne: The quality and outcomes framework that underpins the existing general medical services contract contains 11 quality indicators relating to measurement of blood pressure, including a section devoted to recording diagnosis and ongoing management of high blood pressure.

The Department's public health campaigns make a significant contribution to preventing hypertension. These include campaigns on smoking and healthy eating, and the Food Standards Agency's campaign on reducing salt consumption.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence and the Newcastle guideline development and research unit have issued a guideline on the diagnosis and management of hypertension, or high blood pressure, in adults in primary care. The routine use of home monitoring devices for blood pressure is not currently recommended because their value has not been adequately established and their appropriate use in primary care remains an issue for further research.

Hypothyroidism

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to inform health professionals on how best to diagnose hypothyroidism; what current best practice is in relation to the diagnosis of hypothyroidism; and whether she plans to instruct the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to draw up guidance on the diagnosis and management of hypothyroidism. [18362]

Mr. Byrne: At present, it is considered good medical practice to confirm a diagnosis of hypothyroidism though physical examination, clinical history and blood tests.

PRODIGY guidance (www.prodigy.nhs.uk) offers advice on the management of a range of conditions and symptoms, including hypothyroidism, that are commonly seen in primary care. The guidance is

advisory and has been developed to assist health care professionals, together with patients, make decisions about the management of the patient's health.

We are committed to keeping all interventions and management regimes under review and will consider commissioning guidance from the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) if these have a significant impact on patient care, national health service resources, or Government health related policies. We have no plans at this time to instruct NICE to develop guidance on the diagnosis and management of hypothyroidism. or Government health related policies. We have no plans at this time to instruct NICE to develop guidance on the diagnosis and management of hypothyroidism.

International Recruitments

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* nurses and midwives and *(b)* doctors were internationally recruited through bilateral agreements or memoranda of understanding in each year for which figures are available, broken down by country. [14181]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 10 October 2005]:* We have bilateral agreements or Memoranda of Understanding with India, Indonesia, the Philippines, South Africa and Spain.

The numbers of doctors and nurses registering with the General Medical Council and the Nursing and Midwifery Council respectively since 2001 are shown in the following tables.

Doctors—including specialist registrars, general practitioners and junior doctors

	Year of registration			
Country	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
India	1,326	1,892	2,985	3,643
Indonesia	1	0	0	1
Philippines	9	8	17	16
South Africa	547	892	3204	4
Spain	88	115	121	107

Nurses

	Year of registration			
Country	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
India	218	1,352	2,655	3,709
Indonesia	0	0	5	1
Philippines	1,692	4,361	4,747	2,898
South Africa	772	1,065	1,878	1,202
Spain	374	197	308	220

Note:
These tables relate to registration and therefore do not identify where the individual was employed—national health service or independent sector—or even if the individual secured employment in the United Kingdom.

Management and Administrative Costs

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how the management and administrative costs referred to in the guidance on commissioning a patient-led NHS issued on 28 July by Sir Nigel Crisp will be defined; and how much was spent on them in the NHS financial year 2004–05. [16555]

Mr. Byrne: In "Commissioning a Patient led NHS", management and administrative costs are defined as the pay costs, non-pay costs and the cost of estate relating to the management and administration in primary care trusts (PCTs), strategic health authorities (SHAs) and ambulance trusts. Pay costs relating to management and administration are separately identified in a note to the audited annual accounts of SHAs and PCTs.

Total management costs for 2004–05 were £2.58 billion—3.7 per cent. of the total national health service budget and 1.3 per cent. lower than in 1997–98.

Non-pay and estate costs relating to management and administration are not separately identified in the notes to the accounts.

Maternity Units

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which hospitals in England have midwife-led maternity units; and how many births took place in each in 2004. [17765]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not collected centrally.

The maternity records collected through the Hospital Episodes Statistics system are usually identified only to trust level, rather than to any specific unit within the trust. Some trusts provide information regarding the staff group with lead responsibility for care for example, midwife-led or consultant-led, but this does not allow the identification of midwife-only units.

Mesothelioma

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what advice she has received from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence on the effectiveness of Alimta, in combination with other interventions, in ameliorating mesothelioma; [16985]

(2) in which national health service areas Alimta is accepted as a treatment for mesothelioma by the NHS. [17000]

Jane Kennedy: Alimta is licensed for the treatment of malignant pleural mesothelioma and can be prescribed across the national health service for those patients who fit the licensed criteria with the agreement of the clinicians and primary care trusts (PCTs) concerned.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is appraising Alimta for the treatment of mesothelioma and guidance is expected in October 2006.

Funding for licensed treatments should not be withheld because guidance from NICE is unavailable. In these circumstances, we expect PCTs to take full account of available evidence when reaching funding decisions. This is confirmed in "Health Service Circular 1999/176", which asks NHS bodies to continue with local arrangements for the managed introduction of new technologies where guidance from NICE is not available at the time the treatment or technology first became available.

Methadone

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many deaths have been attributed to methadone use in each of the last five years. [18008]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Andrew Rosindell, dated 20 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many deaths have been attributed to methadone use in each of the last five years. (18008)

Available figures relate to the number of deaths from drug-related poisoning where methadone was mentioned on the death certificate. The most recently available information is for deaths in 2003. It is not possible to identify from death certificates which substance was the primary cause when more than one was involved. Figures related to the number of deaths where methadone was mentioned on the death certificate, either alone or with other substances, are shown in the table below. This table is taken from information published in the annual report: "Deaths related to drug poisoning: England and Wales, 1999–2003", which was published in *Health Statistics Quarterly* 25 in February 2005.

Number of deaths from drug-related poisoning[1] where methadone was mentioned on the death certificate, England and Wales, 1999–2003[2]

	Methadone mentioned alone[3]	*Methadone and other substances*	*Total mentions of methadone*
1999	168	130	298
2000	133	105	238
2001	97	110	207
2002	90	126	216
2003	68	107	175

[1] cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes F11-F16, F18-F19, X40-X44, X60-X64, X85 and Y10-Y14.
[2] Data are for deaths occurring in the calendar year.
[3] Methadone was the only drug mentioned on the death certificate.

Mobile Communications (Interference)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency has to re-examine the Medical Devices Agency's device bulletin, MDA DB 9702 March 1997, published in March 1997, on the effects of mobile communications on a range of medical devices. [18368]

Jane Kennedy: The advice in the publication DB 9702, "Electromagnetic Compatibility of Medical Devices with Mobile Communications", has been reviewed on a regular basis by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and its predecessor the Medical Devices Agency.

A further device bulletin, DB 1999(02), "Emergency Service Radios and Mobile Data Terminal: Compatibility Problems with Medical Devices", was published in May 1999, which addressed the impact of radio communications on the safe use of a range of medical devices.

An update document, SN 2001(06), was published in March 2001, which covered the potential interference with medical devices by TETRA radio systems employed by the emergency services and media broadcasts from hospital premises.

Most recently, the MHRA published guidance on its website in July 2004, which referenced DB 9702 and DB 1999(02). This guidance advised that health care providers should actively manage the use of radio frequency spectrum on their own sites, and consider the potential effects of communication equipment on all medical devices.

Myasthenia Gravis

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what support the Government provides for people diagnosed with myasthenia gravis; and if she will make a statement. [17770]

Mr. Byrne: The Government are sympathetic to the needs of patients with myasthenia gravis and the impact this condition can have on their independence and quality of life.

Patients with myasthenia gravis are able to access a range of national health service and social care services, which are tailored to meet their individual needs, to help them manage their condition. It is for primary care trusts, in consultation with other stakeholders, to determine which services, including those for people with myasthenia gravis, their local populations require and ensuring the appropriate provision of these services.

The national service framework (NSF) for long-term conditions is supporting local sustained improvements in service quality for people with long-term neurological conditions, including myasthenia gravis. The NSF addresses a range of key issues including the need for equitable access to a range of services; good quality information and support for patients and carers; the ability to see a specialist and get the right investigations and diagnosis as quickly as possible.

National Pulmonary Hypertension Service

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what arrangements have been made for central funding of the national pulmonary hypertension service for *(a)* the current year and *(b)* 2006. [16968]

Mr. Byrne: Pulmonary hypertension centres are nationally designated by the National Specialised Commissioning Advisory Group (NSCAG) but pulmonary hypertension services are commissioned and funded by primary care trusts; there are no plans to change these arrangements. NSCAG's ongoing role is limited to setting national pulmonary hypertension standards and monitoring pulmonary hypertension centres' adherence to these standards on a biennial basis.

National Specialist Commissioning Advisory Group

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what role is performed by the national specialist commissioning advisory group in supporting regional centres of *(a)* specialism, *(b)* research and *(c)* drug treatment. [16980]

Mr. Byrne: The national specialised commissioning advisory group (NSCAG) nationally commissions very specialised services for a specified list of rare conditions when a handful of hospitals across the country provide a service to a national caseload not exceeding 1,000 (and

frequently less than 400) a year. Specialised services, including drug treatments or research, which are provided at regional level are not within the remit of NSCAG.

No Secrets Guidance

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 20 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1911W, on the No Secrets guidance, whether each local authority has *(a)* established multi-agency adult protection procedures in accordance with No Secrets and *(b)* produced a multi-agency annual report or statement on vulnerable adults work; and how many (i) adult protection referrals were received, (ii) investigations were undertaken and (iii) investigations were upheld as adult protection by each local authority. [17915]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* I understand from the chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspections (CSCI), that out of 150 local authorities, 145 have established multi-agency adult protection procedures in accordance with No Secrets. Four local councils have reported procedures that were underdeveloped.

Out of 150 local authorities, 99 have produced a multi-agency annual report or statement on vulnerable adults work, while 45 have reported that this work was underdeveloped.

The information obtained by CSCI on progress in developing multi-agency protection procedures will be used as part of the criteria for performance assessments.

Information on the number of adult protection referrals received, investigations undertaken and investigations that were upheld as adult protection by each local authority is not held centrally or by CSCI.

Pakistani Midwives

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many Pakistani midwives applied to be registered with the National Midwifery Council as part of the overseas nursing programme in each of the last three years; and how many were accepted. [17092]

Mr. Byrne: The overseas nurses programme was introduced by the Nursing and Midwifery Council on 1 September 2005. The programme does not apply to midwives.

Data on registrations are not collected by the Department.

Peripheral Vascular Disease

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to improve the care given to those with peripheral vascular disease. [18359]

Mr. Byrne: The Department convened the vascular programme board last year to co-ordinate work on all vascular diseases including coronary heart disease, stroke, diabetes, peripheral vascular disease. The board was set up because the prevention and treatment of these disease areas are closely linked and there are considerable synergies on such issues as primary and secondary prevention, chronic disease management and health inequalities. The board will play a major role in the achievement of the Governments targets in these areas.

The Department's public health campaigns make a significant contribution to preventing peripheral vascular disease. These include campaigns on smoking and healthy eating, and the Food Standards Agency campaign on reducing salt consumption.

Prescription (Charges/Guidance)

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Health where English primary care trusts can use *(a)* All Wales Medicines Strategy Group and *(b)* Scottish Medicines Consortium guidance to make decisions on funding and prescribing where National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence appraisals are not available. [18674]

Jane Kennedy: In August 1999, the Department issued Health Service Circular 1999/176, which asks national health service bodies to continue with local arrangements for the managed introduction of new technologies where guidance from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence is not available at the time the technology first became available. These arrangements should involve an assessment of the available evidence, which can include guidance issued by the All Wales Medicines Strategy Group and the Scottish Medicines Consortium.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prescriptions incurring a prescription charge were dispensed with a net ingredient cost of *(a)* under £3.50 and *(b)* under £6.50 in the last three years for which figures are available. [17760]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is shown in the table. The figures are taken from the prescription cost analysis of the Prescription Pricing Authority.

Prescription items dispensed

	Under £3.50	*Under £6.50*	*Total number of chargeable items dispensed*	*Total number of items dispensed*
2002	23.8	30.2	59.6	617.0
2003	23.5	29.8	58.9	649.7
2004	23.4	29.9	57.8	686.1

Primary Care Trusts

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many planned primary care trusts will cover areas outside geographic areas covered by corresponding hospital trusts. [17809]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* Following the publication of "Commissioning a Patient led NHS" on 28 July, strategic health authorities will be submitting proposals to the Department for the configuration of their primary care trusts (PCTs) based on criteria set out in the document. The Department will consider the proposals and respond by the end of November. Any agreed changes will require formal straightforward consultation for three months from December. I am therefore unable to say what the configuration of PCTs will be until the outcome of that is known.

Private Sector NHS Treatment

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what requirements will be placed on private sector providers of services to the NHS to invest in the training of medical staff. [17428]

Mr. Byrne: Independent sector treatment centres (ISTCs) providing a service to the national health service will be expected to offer training for all staff. This will be included in their contract.

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the likely impact on NHS recruitment and retention of the demand for medical staff in the new private health centres. [17429]

Mr. Byrne: Recruitment and retention are kept under review as part of longer term medical work force planning which aims to deliver sufficient appropriately trained people to provide the healthcare that is needed, whatever the setting. We have introduced rules to ensure that skilled professionals remain in the national health service.

Psychological Therapy

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the waiting times for psychological therapy were in the last period for which figures are available, broken down by mental health trust. [16971]

Mr. Byrne: Information is not available in the requested format. The Department only collects waiting times for consultant led services and since the majority of referrals for psychological therapies would be to other mental health professionals such as clinical psychologists, this information does not capture the volume of activity accurately. At the end of June, there were 362 people waiting for an outpatient appointment with a psychotherapy consultant. Of these, 25 had waited 13 to 17 weeks, 77 eight to 13 weeks, 127 four to eight weeks, and 133 less then four weeks. A further six people were waiting for an inpatient appointment with a psychotherapy consultant. Of these, three had waited less than a month and the other three had waited less than two months. In line with the Government's manifesto commitment, the Department will continue to improve services for people with mental health problems at primary and secondary levels and this will include extending the availability of psychological therapies of proven effectiveness.

Scanning Services

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health who incurs the financial cost of making a site ready for a mobile scanner operated by Alliance Medical Ltd. [17912]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* The national health service is responsible for ensuring that sites are suitable for the mobile scanning units to allow scanning to commence. To support this, the Department allocated central funding to strategic health authority clusters to upgrade the sites identified by SHAs.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of sexually transmitted diseases were diagnosed in *(a)* England, *(b)* London and *(c)* Kingston and Surbiton (i) in each year since 2002 and (ii) in each of the last 12 months; and which sexually transmitted disease was the most frequently diagnosed in each case. [16682]

Caroline Flint: The number of new diagnoses of syphilis, gonorrhoea, genital chlamydial infection, herpes, genital warts and other diagnoses seen in genito-urinary medicine (GUM) clinics (KC60 return) in England, London, and the Kingston Primary Care Trust (PCT) are shown in the tables. For all these geographical areas, the most frequently diagnosed sexually transmitted infection over the time period shown was genital chlamydial infection.

1: Diagnoses of selected sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) GUM clinics by sex, England, 2002–04

Condition code	Condition description	Sex	2002	2003	2004
A1, A2	Primary and secondary infectious syphilis	Male	1,059	1,350	1,748
		Female	137	181	262
B1, B2	Uncomplicated gonorrhoea	Male	16,940	16,236	14,605
		Female	7,417	7,220	6,299
C4A. C4C	Uncomplicated chlamydial infection	Male	34,331	37,927	42,518
		Female	43,786	47,470	50,096
C10A	Anogenital herpes simplex—first attack	Male	6,522	6,424	6,421
		Female	10,988	10,696	10,468
C11A	Anogenital warts—first attack	Male	33,983	34,569	36,397
		Female	29,951	30,625	31,701
	Total all other STDs[1, 2]	Male	202,107	216,942	228,407
		Female	256,459	263,550	267,497

2: Diagnoses for selected STDs in GUM clinics by sex, London, 2002–04

Condition code	Condition description	Sex	2002	2003	2004
A1,A2	Primary and secondary infectious syphilis	Male	568	621	732
		Female	76	103	115
B1,B2	Uncomplicated gonorrhoea	Male	7,114	6,190	5,614
		Female	3,043	2,639	2,095
C4AC4C	Uncomplicated chlamydial infection	Male	9,442	9,845	10,186
		Female	9,987	10,366	10,526

2: Diagnoses for selected STDs in GUM clinics by sex, London, 2002–04

Condition code	Condition description	Sex	2002	2003	2004
C10A	Anogenital herpes simplex—first attack	Male	1,995	2,034	1,958
		Female	2,872	2,943	2,853
C11A	Anogenital warts—first attack	Male	7,230	6,955	7,372
		Female	5,777	5,578	5,735
	Total all other STDs[1,2]	Male	71,542	79,955	84,327
		Female	90,827	91,795	93,045

3: Diagnoses of selected STDs in GUM clinics by sex, Kingston PCT, 2002–04

Condition code	Condition description	Sex	2002	2003	2004
A1, A2	Primary and secondary infectious syphilis	Male	[3]—	11	21
		Female	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
B1, B2	Uncomplicated gonorrhoea	Male	43	47	49
		Female	18	35	46
C4A, C4C	Uncomplicated chlamydial infection	Male	287	304	330
		Female	480	476	568
C10A	Anogenital herpes simplex—first attack	Male	24	25	52
		Female	65	73	105
C11A	Anogenital warts—first attack	Male	152	196	251
		Female	175	220	233
	Total all other STDs[1,2]	Female	1,369	1,548	1,809
		Male	1,152	1,397	1,896

[1] Diagnoses include: complicated gonorrhoea, chancroid/lymphogranuloma venereum (LGV)/donovonosis, complicated chlamydial infection, uncomplicated non-gonococcal/non-specific urethritis in males, molluscum contagiosum, trichomoniasis, scabies/pediculosis pubis. A full list of conditions is given on the Health Protection Agency website at www.hpa.org.uk.
[2] Not all diagnoses made in GUM clinics are sexually transmitted.
[3] Between one and 10 cases diagnosed.

Sleep Apnoea

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will direct the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to conduct an appraisal on the use of continuous positive airway pressure for the treatment of sleep apnoea. [18457]

Mr. Byrne: We have no plans to ask the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to conduct an appraisal on the use of continuous positive airway pressure for the treatment of sleep apnoea.

Specialist Rehabilitation Beds

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the average number of specialist rehabilitation beds per 1,000 people in *(a)* each of the English regions and *(b)* England was in the latest year for which figures are available; [16672]

(2) what estimate she has made of the optimum number of specialist rehabilitation beds per 1,000 people in England; and if she will make a statement. [16673]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* Information is not centrally collected on the number of specialist rehabilitation beds and no such estimate has been made of the optimum number of specialist rehabilitation beds per 1,000 people in England. The number of beds in national health service facilities varies, depending on the range and type of services they provide and the way in which the admission and discharge of patients is managed. These are matters for the NHS locally to determine, but work is in hand to scope the current provision of rehabilitation services across health and social care.

Stroke

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what methods her Department is using to increase awareness and understanding of stroke. [17296]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* The Department highlighted stroke as one of eight standards in the older people's national service framework (2001). In recognition of the need to increase understanding of stroke prevention, care and treatment, the Department is investing £20 million over five years in a new United Kingdom stroke research network.

The Department's public health campaigns make a significant contribution to preventing strokes. These include campaigns on smoking and healthy eating, and the Food Standards Agency campaign on reducing salt consumption.

Targets

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the targets that *(a)* her Department and *(b)* each executive agency her Department is responsible for has set during the next 12 months. [12774]

Jane Kennedy: The Department's forward plan sets out its objectives. This is available on the Department's website at http://www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/71/22/04117122.pdf. Copies are available in the Library.

The Secretary of State must approve targets set by executive agencies.

The NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency's (NHS PASA) targets are published in its business plan. This is available on the NHS PASA website at http://www.pasa.nhs.uk/publications/2005-06 Business Plan.pdf. Copies are available in the Library.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's (MHRA) targets are published in its business plan. This is available on the MHRA website at http://www.mhra.gov.uk/home/groups/comms-sp/documents/publication/cond018034.pdf. Copies are available in the Library.

Thyroid Patients

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many thyroid patients have been wrongly diagnosed as having chronic fatigue syndrome in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement. [16959]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected by the Department.

Your Health, Your Care, Your Say

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will set out the *(a)* purpose, *(b)* programme and *(c)* costs of the consultation Your Health, Your Care, Your Say. [17215]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* The Your Health, Your Care, Your Say consultation is a deliberative process designed to find out what the public wants from community health and social care services to meet its everyday needs. The programme includes four regional pubiic engagement events, held in Gateshead, Leicester, London and Plymouth and a national event in Birmingham. Local health and social care communities, as well as stakeholder and voluntary organisations, are being encouraged to facilitate local public engagement events. People can also take part in the consultation by completing an on-line questionnaire at www.nhs.uk/yoursay. The estimated eventual cost of the nationally organised elements of the consultation is expected to be about £1.2 million, funded from the Department's running costs budget.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how members of the public are selected to attend events organised as part of the Your Health, Your Care, Your Say consultation. [17216]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 14 October 2005]:* Members of the public are selected randomly from electoral registers. They are invited to express an interest in attending an event and to provide details about themselves. The final selection is designed to be broadly representative of the public and health and social care service users in the regional or national populations, taking account factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, health and personal circumstances.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many strategic health authorities held local consultations on your health, your care, your say, broken down by *(a)* location and *(b)* number of people who attended. [17412]

Mr. Byrne: We have encouraged strategic health authorities and local authorities, as well as professional and voluntary organisations, to facilitate local engagement events, but details about where these are taking place and the number of people attending is not collected centrally.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which organisations have been invited to complete the questionnaire on Your Health, Your Care, Your Say. [17421]

Mr. Byrne: The on-line questionnaire is for people to complete as individuals and more than 9,000 questionnaires have been completed so far.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects the results of the Your Health, Your Care, Your Say questionnaire to be published. [17443]

Mr. Byrne: We will publish the results from the Department's website questionnaire around the time we publish our White Paper on improving community health and care.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance was given to Opinion Leaders Research by her Department on the organisations to which invitations to regional consultations on Your Health, Your Care, Your Say should be issued. [17480]

Mr. Byrne: None. Invitations to take part in regional consultations are issued to individuals not to organisations.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many people attended the Your Health, Your Care, Your Say regional meetings at *(a)* Gateshead, *(b)* Leicester, *(c)* London and *(d)* Plymouth; [17529]

(2) when *(a)* the minutes and *(b)* the attendee lists of the regional consultations on Your Health, Your Care, Your Say will be published; [17531]

(3) what the agenda items were at the Your Health, Your Care, Your Say regional consultations *(a)* in England and *(b)* in London on 29 September. [17562]

Mr. Byrne: Information about the numbers of attenders, the agendas and the outcomes of the regional Your Health, Your Care, Your Say consultation events in Gateshead, Leicester, London and Plymouth are set out in the reports of those events, copies of which have been placed in the Library. The names of members of the public who attended these events is not held by the Department. The national consultation will take place in Birmingham on Saturday, 29 October 2005.

TREASURY

Child Benefit

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the purposes of child benefit. [20163]

Dawn Primarolo: Child benefit recognises the costs of children for all families by directing weekly support for each child to the main carer irrespective of income. The rate of child benefit for the first child has risen by 25 per cent. in real terms since 1997.

The Government have recently taken powers to extend child benefit to young people over the age of 16 in unwaged training and to 19-year-olds who are finishing a course of education or unwaged training they started before they turned 19. This extension will be implemented from April 2006.

Child Trust Fund

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people are employed in the administration of the Child Trust Fund; and if he will make a statement. [20008]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The number of people employed in the administration of the Child Trust Fund is currently 79.

European Court of Justice (UK Tax Revenue)

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the cases pending before the European Court of Justice in which UK tax revenue is at stake. [17088]

Dawn Primarolo: There are a number of cases pending before the European Court of Justice challenging UK tax law and the legislation of other member states.

The UK direct and indirect tax cases pending before the ECJ are set out as follows:

UK direct tax cases pending before the ECJ:

C-446/03, Marks and Spencer

C-196/04, Cadbury-Schweppes

C-374/04, Test Claimants in Class IV of the ACT Group Litigation

C-446/04, Test Claimants in the FII Group Litigation

C-524/04, Test Claimants in the Thin Capitalization Group Litigation

C-201/05, Test Claimants in the CFC and Dividend Group Litigation

C-203/05, Vodafone 2

UK indirect tax cases pending before the ECJ:

C-484/03, Bond House Systems

C-354/03, Optigen

C355/03, Fulcrum Electronics Ltd

C-63/04, Centralan Property Ltd

C-255/02, Halifax

C-419-02, BUPA

C223-03, Huddersfield

C-369/04, Hutchinson 3G UK ltd

C-251/05, Talacre Beach Caravan Sales

C-491/04, Dollond and Aitchison

C-384/04, Federation of Technological Industries and 53 others

C305/03, Commission v UK

It would not, however, be sensible for me to speculate as to whether or not UK tax revenue is at stake in advance of decisions to be taken by the ECJ.

Employment Statistics (North-east)

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people were in work in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside and *(c)* the UK in each year since 1997. [19309]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Stephen Hepburn, dated 20 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about employment. (19309)

The attached table shows the total number of people, aged 16 and over, in employment, resident in the Jarrow constituency, South Tyneside local authority and for the UK for the periods ending in February each year from 1998 to 2004 (based on annual local area Labour Force Survey data) and for April 2004 to March 2005, the latest available data, from the Annual Population Survey. These estimates as with any sample survey are subject to sampling variability.

The data is published on the Office for National Statistics's Nomis website: www.nomisweb.co.uk.

Table 1: Number of people aged 16 and over in employment by area of residence

Thousand

12 months ending	*Jarrow constituency*	*South Tyneside*	*United Kingdom*
February 1998	32	57	26,357
February 1999	35	59	26,659
February 2000	36	58	26,908
February 2001	35	58	27,180
February 2002	36	60	27,433
February 2003	35	61	27,566
February 2004	35	60	27,789
March 2005	35	62	28,032

Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey; Annual Population Survey

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the level of long-term *(a)* youth and *(b)* adult employment was in (i) Jarrow constituency, (ii) South Tyneside and (iii) the UK in each year since 1997; [19307]

(2) how many people were unemployed in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside and *(c)* the UK in each year since 1997. [19308]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Stephen Hepburn, dated 20 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about unemployment. (19307, 19308)

Tables 1 to 3 attached show the total number of unemployed, the numbers of long-term adult unemployed (over 12 months) and long-term youth (aged 16 to 24) unemployed in the Jarrow constituency, South Tyneside local authority and for the UK for the periods ending in February each year from 1998 to 2004 (based on annual local area Labour Force Survey data) and for April 2004 to March 2005, the latest available data, from the Annual Population Survey. These estimates, as with any sample survey, are subject to sampling variability.

The Office for National Statistics also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas. Tables 4 to 6 attached show the annual average number of adult JSA claimants, claiming for over 12 months, and the corresponding number of JSA claimants aged 18 to 24 (claiming for over 12 months) resident in the Jarrow constituency, South Tyneside and the UK for 1997 to 2004.

The data in tables 4 to 6 are published on the Office for National Statistics's Nomis(r) website: www.nomisweb.co.uk

Table 1: Number of unemployed resident in the Jarrow constituency

Thousand

		Long-term unemployed (over 12 months)	
12 month sending	All	All	Youth (aged 16 to 24)
February 1998	5	n/a	n/a
February 1999	3	[2]	[2]
February 2000	4	1	[2]
February 2001	4	1	[3]
February 2002	4	1	[2]
February 2003	3	1	[2]
February 2004	3	[3]	[2]
March 2005[1]	3	1	[2]

n/a = Data not available.

[1] Annual Population Survey.

[2] Zero or disclosive sample size.

[3] Less than 500.

Source:

Annual local area Labour Force Survey; Annual Population Survey.

Table 2: Number of unemployed resident in South Tyneside

Thousand

		Long-term unemployed (over 12 months)	
12 months ending	All	All	Youth (aged 16 to 24)
February 1998	8	n/a	n/a
February 1999	7	3	[2]
February 2000	11	4	[2]
February 2001	8	3	[3]
February 2002	7	2	[3]
February 2003	7	1	[3]
February 2004	6	1	1
March 2005[1]	6	1	[3]

n/a = Data not available.

[1] Annual Population Survey.

[2] Zero or disclosive sample size.

[3] Less than 500.

Source:

Annual local area Labour Force Survey; Annual Population Survey.

Table 3: Number of unemployed in the United Kingdom

Thousand

		Long-term unemployed (over 12 months)	
12 months ending	All	All	Youth (aged 16 to 24)
February 1998	1,911	n/a	n/a
February 1999	1,730	520	82
February 2000	1,689	486	69
February 2001	1,518	410	68
February 2002	1,450	354	64
February 2003	1,494	322	61
February 2004	1,444	321	67
March 2005[1]	1,378	288	66

n/a = Data not available.

[1] Annual Population Survey.

Source:

Annual local area Labour Force Survey; Annual Population Survey.

Table 4: Number of JSA claimants resident in the Jarrow constituency

	Claiming over 12 months[1]		
Annual averages	All	All	Youth (aged 18 to 24)
1997	3,120	865	170
1998	2,765	475	70
1999	2,820	560	10
2000	2,625	555	5
2001	2,375	505	5
2002	2,275	405	5
2003	1,985	315	5
2004	1,740	260	5

[1] Computerised claims only. Data rounded to nearest 5.

Source:

Jobcentre Plus Administrative system.

Table 5: Number of JSA claimants resident in South Tyneside

	Claiming over 12 months[1]		
Annual averages	All	All	Youth (aged 18 to 24)
1997	7,005	2,025	395
1998	6,285	1,150	185
1999	6,475	1,430	25
2000	6,060	1,420	15
2001	5,540	1,280	15
2002	5,205	1,030	15
2003	4,590	795	15
2004	4,080	655	10

[1] Computerised claims only. Data rounded to nearest 5.

Source:

Jobcentre Plus Administrative system.

Table 6: Number of JSA claimants in the United Kingdom

	Claiming over 12 months[1]		
Annual averages	All	All	Youth (aged 18 to 24)
1997	1,602,440	462,360	78,970
1998	1,362,340	320,280	45,310
1999	1,263,000	295,935	13,800
2000	1,102,255	237,060	6,240
2001	983,000	186,770	4,500
2002	958,760	149,340	5,040
2003	945,895	135,735	5,420
2004	866,145	128,660	6,260

[1] Computerised claims only. Data rounded to nearest 5.

Source:

Jobcentre Plus Administrative system.

Equitable Life

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions he has had with members of Equitable Life's Board of Directors regarding the failure of that company's recent legal action against its auditor, Ernst and Young. [19629]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Treasury has had no such discussions.

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials have had with the parliamentary Commissioner for administration concerning his ongoing inquiry into Equitable Life; and whether he has given him an indication of when the findings of the inquiry will be published. [19633]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Parliamentary Ombudsman's investigation into the prudential regulation of Equitable Life is, like all such investigations, being conducted in private. The Treasury is co-operating fully with the investigation.

The timing of the Ombudsman's report is a matter for her, but her Office has stated publicly that she hopes to report in spring 2006.

Firearms Seizure

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will publish the HM Customs and Excise assessment of the percentage of firearms seized at ports of entry that are intended for criminal use; [17275]

(2) how many firearms were seized at ports of entry in each of the past five years for which figures are available; and how many of these were seized as a consequence of inaccurate licences or paperwork. [17276]

Dawn Primarolo: The following table shows the number of firearms seized by HM Revenue and Customs in the last five years. It includes all firearms as defined in the Firearms Act 1968, but excludes self defence sprays, stun guns and parts of firearms.

Financial year	*Number of rifles and hand guns seized*	*Number of shot guns seized*
1999–2000	512	129
2000–01	211	44
2001–02	415	219
2002–03	228	36
2003–04	285	8

Information on HMRC's detections of smuggled firearms is shared between HMRC's investigation staff, NCIS and police who assess the seriousness of the case and agree the arrangements for any follow up investigation. All cases other than those involving technical irregularities are considered for investigation either by police or HMRC.

HMRC does not categorise seizures according to intended use as any attempt to smuggle a firearm is serious and seizures where there was no specific information can lead to the detection of further serious crime.

Where a case has been referred to the police for investigation HMRC central records do not show whether or not criminal use was suspected at the time or subsequently established. A historic review to establish whether seizures were on the grounds of technical errors including inaccurate papers and licences or where there was smuggling for intended criminal use would only be available at disproportionate cost.

HMRC's current assessment is that the incidence where firearms are smuggled with the intention of use in gun crime is low but that this remains a constant threat. They continue to work closely with NCIS and police forces to improve the intelligence available in this area.

HM Revenue and Customs

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people work for Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs in Northern Ireland. [19572]

Dawn Primarolo: At 1 April 2005, HM Customs and Excise employed 712 full-time equivalent staff units in Northern Ireland.

In April 2005 the functions of HM Customs and Excise and the Inland Revenue were brought together to form HM Revenue and Customs.

Jim Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many whole-time equivalent staff are employed in HM Revenue and Customs Large Business Service; and how many were employed in each of the predecessor sections of Revenue and Customs in April 2004. [19261]

Dawn Primarolo: At 1 October 2005 there were 1,875 FTE units employed in HMRC Large Business Services.

At 1 April 2004 there were 998 FTE units in the Large Business Group of HMCE, and 802 FTE units within the Large Business Office of Inland Revenue.

The small increase in staff over the period is due to internal reorganisation and new work for Spend to Save compliance activity.

Efficiencies will be identified as HMRC develop and implement the LBS Business Design Model next year, which will lead to a reduction in staff numbers.

Jim Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax offices were closed *(a)* in total and *(b)* in each (i) region and (ii) country in the UK in each of the last two years. [19265]

Dawn Primarolo: In 2004 the Inland Revenue closed four tax offices. Two of the offices were in London, one was in IR Central (Hertfordshire) and one in IR South (Dorset).

Customs and Excise and the Inland Revenue merged in April 2005 to form HM Revenue and Customs. HMRC has a policy of consolidating offices where possible, both to ensure they offer a joined-up service to customers and also to contribute to their efficiency targets. HMRC have sought to take advantage of opportunities such as the expiry of leases and relocation into existing Government estate and have consolidated ex-IR staff as detailed in the following table.

In all but one of the closures we have maintained a presence in the town. In the one instance where this did not happen the move was involuntary (the landlord would not renew the lease).

Inland Revenue Enquiry Centres (IRECs) were closed in four locations, with customers redirected to other IRECs within a maximum of two miles from the office being closed.

The breakdown by year, region and county:

	2004	*2005*	*Total*
Region			
East of England	1	1	2
London	2	9	11
Scotland	0	1	1
North West	0	1	1
Yorkshire and the Humber	0	1	1
West Midlands	0	1	1
South East	0	1	1
North East	0	2	2
South West	1	2	3

	2004	2005	Total
Total	4	19	23
County			
Dorset	1	0	1
Essex	0	1	1
Gloucestershire	0	1	1
Greater London	2	9	11
Hertfordshire	1	0	1
Lothian	0	1	1
Merseyside	0	1	1
North Yorkshire	0	1	1
Shropshire	0	1	1
Surrey	0	1	1
Tyne and Wear	0	2	2
Wiltshire	0	1	1
Total	4	19	23

Income Tax

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost would be of reducing the higher rate of income tax from 40 per cent. to 35 per cent. [20308]

Dawn Primarolo: Reducing the higher rate of income tax from 40 per cent. to 35 per cent. on earnings and savings would reduce tax revenue by an estimated £5.6 billion in 2005–06.

This cost assumes changing the higher rate tax on earnings and savings only and does not include the effect on other linked taxes and reliefs such as capital gains tax.

The income tax information is based upon the 2002–03 survey of personal incomes (SPI) projected forward to 2005–06 in line with Budget 2005 assumptions.

The figures exclude any estimate of behavioural response to the tax changes, which could be significant given the scale of the changes.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people were subject to effective marginal tax rates of over 50 per cent. in *(a)* 1996–97, *(b)* 2000–01, *(c)* 2003–04 and *(d)* 2004–05; and if he will make a statement. [20152]

Dawn Primarolo: The highest marginal income tax rate was reduced to 40 per cent. from April 1988.

The Treasury publishes ex-ante projections of marginal deduction rates: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1177W.

We do not estimate other outturn figures.

Manufacturing Sectors (Work Force)

Jon Cruddas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of the *(a)* UK and *(b)* London work force was accounted for by the manufacturing sector in each year since 1992. [19156]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Jon Cruddas, dated 20 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about manufacturing employment. (19156)

The attached table shows the percentage of employee jobs in manufacturing, in London and United Kingdom, from 1992 to 2005; the latest period for which information is available. Workforce jobs data for the United Kingdom are also provided and include the self-employed, HM Forces and Government-supported trainees. The data are published on ONS' Nomis website at: http://www.nomisweb.co.uk

Percentage of jobs in United Kingdom and London in the manufacturing sector; 1992 to 2005[1]

	United Kingdom —workforce jobs[2]	United Kingdom employee jobs[3]	London— employee jobs[3]
1992	16.5	16.2	9.0
1993	16.0	15.7	8.8
1994	15.9	15.8	8.4
1995	15.9	15.9	8.0
1996	16.0	17.4	8.6
1997	15.9	17.2	8.4
1998	15.9	17.0	8.0
1999	15.1	16.2	7.5
2000	14.4	15.5	7.4
2001	13.7	14.7	6.9
2002	13.0	13.9	6.4
2003	12.2	13.1	5.9
2004	11.7	12.5	5.8
2005	11.2	12.1	5.4

[1] Data are for June each year.

[2] Workforce jobs, seasonally adjusted, includes the self-employed, HM Forces and Government-supported trainees.

[3] Employee jobs, not seasonally adjusted, excludes the self-employed, HM Forces and Government-supported trainees.

Source:

Work force jobs and employee jobs.

Royal Family (Annual Accounts)

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will invite *(a)* Her Majesty the Queen and *(b)* His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to submit their annual accounts for scrutiny to the National Audit Office. [17302]

Mr. Gordon Brown: There is no obligation for Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to produce personal accounts.

Stamp Duty

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what tax revenue his Department received from stamp duty on the sale of *(a)* residential and *(b)* commercial and business properties in each financial year from 2000–01. [19626]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Estimates of Stamp Duty revenue from Land and Property (Stamp Duty Land Tax from December 2003) for the UK are available separately for residential and non residential properties for the years 2000–01 to 2003–04 at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/stamp_duty/table 15_3_october04.pdf

Estimates for 2004–05 are due to be published at the end of this month.

Tax Credits

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax claimants have been sent improved annual tax credit award notices which set out how their award has been calculated. [17206]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 13 October 2005]:* I refer the right hon. Member to my answer of 4 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 97W, to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws).

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his answer of 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, columns 2386–387W, on tax credits, if he will update the figures to take account of the latest estimate of total tax credit overpayments in 2003–04; and if he will make a statement. [19284]

Dawn Primarolo: The answer to the question asked on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, 2386–387W, was based on a special extract of data taken specifically for the purpose of producing National Statistics. The information requested is not available because this would require a further special extract to be taken and some of the underlying data are not available in a form to allow such analysis, so could be provided only at disproportionate cost. National Statistics on awards for 2004–05 will be published in spring 2006.

Timber

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many prosecutions for the attempted importation of illegally logged timber into the UK have taken place in each of the last three years; and what penalties were imposed in each case in which all proceedings have been completed; [19982]

(2) how many incidents of the attempted importation of illegally felled timber into the UK there have been in each of the last three years; what types of timber were involved; how much timber was involved in each case; and what the countries of origin of the timber concerned was in each case. [19983]

Dawn Primarolo: There is no legislation in place to prohibit the importation of timber on the specific grounds that it was illegally logged. It is expected that a council regulation to establish the forest law enforcement governance and trade system will be adopted by the council in November 2005. This regulation will prohibit the importation of timber and certain semi-processed timber products into the EU without a valid licence issued by the relevant authorities of the exporting country.

The importation of some species of wood is restricted under council Regulation 338/97 (on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein), which imposes import controls throughout the EU on all species (and their parts and derivatives) set out in the appendices to the convention on international trade in endangered species (CITES).

HM Revenue and Customs made 30 seizures of ramin wood in the last three years for the absence of CITES import permits, export permits or both. In 2003 customs concluded an investigation into ramin imports from the previous year that breached the import restriction by compounding proceedings under section 152 of the Customs and Excise Management Act 1979. However, HMRC cannot say whether the ramin in any of these cases had been illegally felled.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Claims (Hornsey and Wood Green)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of people claiming *(a)* state pension, *(b)* jobseeker's allowance and *(c)* incapacity benefit in Hornsey and Wood Green constituency; and if he will make a statement. [16943]

Mr. Plaskitt: In Hornsey and Wood Green parliamentary constituency, there were 12,400 people in receipt of state pension, as at September 2004; 2,956 people in receipt of jobseeker's allowance, as at September 2005; and 5,400 people in receipt of incapacity benefit or severe disability allowance, as at February 2005. In each case, these are the most recent available figures.

Disability Living Allowance

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have been awarded disability living allowance on the basis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in each of the last five years. [19780]

Mr. Plaskitt: The requested information is not available. Figures are not kept separately for the numbers of disability living allowance awards made to people with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Such awards are included in a wider "Behavioural disorder—including enuresis and hyperactivity" category. Information about the numbers of disability living allowance awards made to people whose main disabling condition falls into that category is in the table.

Number of first awards of disability living allowance (DLA) in Great Britain made to people whose main disabling condition is recorded as "behavioural disorder-including enuresis and hyperactivity"

12 months ending 28 February	*Total number of first awards to DLA*[1]
2001	11,200
2002	13,200
2003	13,700
2004	15,000
2005	14,600

[1] To people whose main disabling condition is recorded as "behavioural disorder—including enuresis and hyperactivity".

Notes:

1. First awards are those made on initial claims, reviews or appeals to people not previously in receipt of the benefit. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. In cases where more than one disability is present, only the main disabling condition is recorded.

Source:

DWP information directorate, 5 per cent. samples.

Housing Benefit

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of housing benefit recipients opted for their housing benefit to be paid directly to their landlord in each year since 1997. [15584]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information requested is in the table. Information is not available beyond May 2003.

As at May	Paid direct to landlord (£000)	Percentage of rent allowance recipients
1997	1,265	68.5
1998	1,290	71.2
1999	1,298	72.3
2000	1,318	75.5
2001	1,345	77.3
2002	1,381	77.8
2003	1,567	80.0

Notes:
1. The figures are based on a 1 per cent. sample and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest thousand and percentages are given to 1 decimal place.
3. The data refers to benefit units, which may be a single person or a couple.
4. Housing benefit figures exclude any extended payment cases.
5. Rent rebate figures are not included here. Rent rebate is credited automatically to a rent account and so different methods of payment are not applicable.

Source:
Housing benefit and council tax benefit management information system, annual 1 percent. sample, taken in May 1997 to May 2003.

Pensions

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* self-employed people, *(b)* people earning less than the lower earnings limit, *(c)* unemployed people and *(d)* other non-contributing people did not have second-tier pension arrangements in each year since 2002. [18636]

Mr. Timms: The table shows the estimated number of people in the UK who did not have private second-tier pension provision (i.e. those who are not contributing to an occupational, personal or stakeholder pension).

Million

Employment status	2002–03	2003–04
Self employed	1.7	1.8
Employees earning less than the lower earnings limit	1.3	1.4
Unemployed	1.0	1.0
Other	6.7	6.7

Notes:
1. All figures are estimates and are taken from the Family Resources Survey (FRS). 2003–04 is the latest year for which data is available. The coverage of the survey is the UK.
2. Second tier pension arrangements cover those contributing to occupational, personal or stakeholder pension schemes. Members who are contributing to a private pension scheme include those who are building up rights within a salary related scheme, those who are currently contributing to a scheme or whose employer makes a contribution on their behalf. Those who contribute to any form of second tier pension are excluded from the figures.
3. The self employed and those earning less than the lower earnings limit covers those working both full time and part time. "Other" covers students, those who are retired, those who are looking after a family or home, those who are permanently sick or disabled, those who are temporarily sick or disabled and any other inactivity. Employment status is reported by the individual.
4. Working age is ages 20–59 for women and 20–64 for men.

Source:
Family Resources Survey.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will make it his policy to set the state pension above the official poverty level; [19124]

(2) if he will make it his policy to link the state pension to average male earnings. [19125]

Mr. Timms: We will continue to administer the state pension in its present form. However, we will review the pensions system following the publication of the Pensions Commission's report and the National Pensions Debate which is currently taking place. We are building a broad consensus for any possible changes to our pensions system.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the additional cost to the Financial Assistance Scheme of extending support to individuals who were between three and 10 years from scheme pension age on 14 May 2004, assuming a 50-plus replacement rate; and if he will make a statement. [19590]

Mr. Timms: No such estimate has been made.

Pensions Ombudsman

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on developments in provision of office space and IT systems for the pensions ombudsman. [16525]

Mr. Timms: Work is under way to deliver refurbished accommodation and a replacement IT system for the pensions ombudsman by spring 2006.

Recycling

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what measures he has put in place to ensure that his Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all copying paper brought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content. [14389]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department for Work and Pensions implemented a new contract for recycled paper containing 80 per cent. post-consumer waste in September 2005. This saw the removal of virgin paper from the bespoke Department for Work and Pensions catalogue.

Water Consumption

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what change there was in water consumption by his Department between 2002 and 31 March 2005; and what assessment he has made of which non-office sites offer opportunities for significant water savings. [14253]

Mr. Plaskitt: The levels of water consumption for the Department for Work and Pensions are given in the table. The Department is working to deliver the specific water targets contained within the "Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate". The figures in the table reflect how water consumption is reported against the specific water consumption target.

	m^3
2002–03	9.14
2003–04	11.2
2004–05	9.3

As reported in the Sustainable Development in Government reports, the whole Department for Work and Pensions estate is designated as office based. There are, therefore, no non-office sites on the estate.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Asylum Seekers

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what numbers of case starts in asylum were allocated, and what numbers were used in *(a)* England and Wales and *(b)* Yorkshire and Humberside region in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [19039]

Bridget Prentice: The information is as follows:

(a) 73,360 new matter starts were allocated in April 2004 in England and Wales, of which 43,966 new matter starts were used by the end of March 2005 by legal aid solicitors. The Legal Services Commission (LSC) also awarded hours to voluntary sector suppliers, of which 13,830 hours were used by these suppliers by the end of March 2005.

(b) 3,340 new matter starts were allocated in April 2004 in the Yorkshire and Humberside region, of which 1,836 new matter starts were used by the end of March 2005. The LSC also awarded hours to voluntary sector suppliers, of which 1,836 hours were used by these suppliers by the end of March 2005.

Child Protection

Annette Brooke: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans she has to review and consult upon child protection and care proceedings; and if she will make a statement. [19850]

Bridget Prentice: On 5 July my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and Lord Chancellor announced a Review of the Family Justice System in the area of Child Care proceedings, to be led jointly by my Department and the Department for Education and Skills. Its Terms of Reference are set out at Annex B of the Command Paper "A Fairer Deal for Legal Aid", published on that day (Cm 6591), and it will report to Ministers by 31 January 2006. The work of the review is involving widespread discussion with those involved in the operation of the system, and implementation of any recommendations could involve further discussion and consultation.

Departmental Expenditure

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) what the total spending by the Department on *(a)* staff, *(b)* accommodation and *(c)* procurement in (i) Dundee East constituency, (ii) Tayside and (iii) the City of Dundee was for the most recent year for which figures are available; [14872]

(2) what the total spending by the Department on *(a)* staff, *(b)* accommodation and *(c)* procurement in Perth and North Perthshire was for the most recent year for which figures are available. [14918]

Bridget Prentice: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 5 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 2786W, by my hon. Friend the Minister for Scotland Office to the hon. Member for Moray (Angus Robertson).

Senior Bar (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what is the perceived religious affiliation based on educational background of the panel selected to oversee appointments to the Senior Bar in Northern Ireland. [19311]

Bridget Prentice: The Queen's Counsel Selection Panel is responsible for recommendations for appointment to Queen's Counsel in Northern Ireland. The Bar Council and Law Society of Northern Ireland are responsible for the appointment of the panel members, which comprise a senior retired Northern Ireland judge, two lay people, two senior barristers and two senior solicitors. The panel were not required to make their community background known.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

British Embassies (Africa)

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what criteria would be used to determine the closure of a British embassy in Africa. [17408]

Mr. Straw: We have no plans to close or open any further sovereign posts in Africa or elsewhere but, like any well run organisation, we will continue to move resources flexibly as priorities require in line with UK interests. We undertook a review of our network last year, the results of which I announced on 15 December 2004, *Official Report*, columns 137–40WS. I announced some small changes to these plans on 11 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 22–23WS. Throughout, in looking at our diplomatic network, in Africa as elsewhere, our aim is to deliver on behalf of the British taxpayer the Government's international priorities in the most efficient and cost-effective way possible.

Correspondence

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the letters from the hon. Member for Banbury to the British

ambassador in Tel Aviv of 31 May, to UKvisas of 15 July, and to Ministers of 19 September regarding Mrs. Liza David will be replied to. [18063]

Dr. Howells: My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Triesman of Tottenham) replied to the hon. Member on 18 October, on behalf of his office, UKvisas and Her Majesty's ambassador in Tel Aviv.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will reply to the letter to him dated 12 July 2005 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Mr. Owen Cooper. [19513]

Dr. Howells: We have no record of having received this letter and have requested a copy from my right hon. Friend's office. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary will reply as soon as possible after a copy of the letter is received.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, dated *(a)* 16 June, with regard to Mr. Abbas, *(b)* 12 July, with regard to Mr. Abdelrazik Salama, *(c)* 7 June, with regard to Mr. Tariq Iqbal and *(d)* 6 September, with regard to Mrs. A Ahmed. [19516]

Dr. Howells: My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Triesman of Tottenham) replied to my right hon. Friend's letters with regard to Mr. Abbas, Mr. Abdelrazik Salama and Mr. Tariq Iqbal on 18 October.

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary replied to his letter with regard to Mrs A. Ahmed on 17 October.

Departmental Vehicles

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many vehicles for which the Department is responsible are fitted with retreaded tyres. [17984]

Mr. Straw: Of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office services fleet of 38 vehicles, we only use retread tyres on our three trailers and on the back axle of our one rigid lorry. No retreads are used on the car or van fleets.

We are also responsible for the procurement of new vehicles for overseas posts, the specification for these vehicles always calls for new tyres and no new purchase vehicles have retread tyres.

Information on the tyre replacement policy of our operational fleet overseas is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

EU (Turkey's Accession)

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* surveys and *(b)* other measures of UK public opinion he has commissioned on Turkey's prospective accession to the European Union. [18482]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has not commissioned any surveys of UK public opinion on Turkey's prospective accession to the European Union. However, the Government closely follow the European Commission's Eurobarometer surveys and opinion polls conducted by various UK based newspapers and media groups.

European Constitution

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answers of 12 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 872W, on the EU constitution, if he will make a statement on the application of qualified majority under EU constitution article III-293 to the decision making process; which *(a)* themes and *(b)* regions have featured as areas of common foreign and security policy activity; who will arbitrate in areas of jurisdictional controversy between the EU Minister and a given member state; and what legal obligations follow a request by the EU Minister to be provided with a seat at international forums attended by the UK. [16320]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The hon. Member will be aware that, following the June European Council, the future of the constitutional treaty is uncertain.

Article III-293 of the EU constitutional treaty, which sets out the role of the European Council in defining the strategic interests and objectives of the Union in external policies, provides that "the European Council shall act unanimously" not by qualified majority. Only European decisions defining a specifically identified Union action or position on these unanimously agreed strategic interests and objectives can be adopted by qualified majority, under article III-300(2*(a)*).

A wide range of themes and regions have already featured as areas of common foreign and security policy activity. However only three of these—Russia, Ukraine and Euromed—have had strategic interests and objectives identified for them in a manner similar to the provisions in article II-293.

Under article I-28.2 of the constitutional treaty the European Union Foreign Minister (EUFM) would carry out his role in common foreign and security policy "as mandated by the Council"—ie the member states acting unanimously. Questions of "jurisdictional controversy" between the EUFM and a member state would therefore be unlikely, and would undoubtedly be addressed and settled amicably in discussions in the Council.

There is no provision in the European Union constitutional treaty which places an obligation on member states or other international organisations to provide the EU Minister with a seat at international forums attended by the UK. My right hon. Friend the then Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. MacShane), set out in more detail the relationship proposed by the constitutional treaty between the EU Foreign Ministers and international organisations, in a letter to the hon. Member for Grantham and Stamford (Mr. Davies). A copy of the letter has been placed in the Library of the House (House of Commons reference: DEP 07/0072).

Heads of State Meeting (Hampton Court)

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the attendees expected at the Informal Meeting of Heads of State or Government at Hampton Court Palace on 27 October; and what the agenda for the meeting is. [18682]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister will set out the scope of the discussion in the letter of invitation to the Informal Meeting of Heads of State or Government. The principal attendees are Heads of State or Government, the President of the EU Commission and the Secretary General of the Council. The list of other attendees has yet to be finalised.

Libya

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Libyan authorities regarding the possible transfer of Abdelbaset al-Megrahi from a Scottish jail; and if he will make a statement. [19428]

Dr. Howells: There has been no discussion with the Libyan authorities about Mr. al-Megrahi's transfer from a Scottish jail. The Government's position remains that, in relation to the Lockerbie trial, those tried and found guilty under Scottish law would serve their prison sentence in Scotland.

UK Ambassadors (Commonwealth)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the names of the UK ambassadors in each Commonwealth country; and on what date each was appointed to the position. [19500]

Mr. Straw: The following table is of all current British High Commissioners to Commonwealth countries and shows the date they were appointed. Some Commonwealth members have Non-Resident High Commissioners (NR).

Country	*High Commissioner*	*Date appointed*
Antigua and Barbuda (NR)	John White (Resident Barbados)	August 2001
Australia	Right hon. Helen Liddell	July 2005
The Bahamas (NR)	Jeremy Cresswell (Resident Jamaica)	July 2005
Bangladesh	Anwar Choudhury	May 2004
Barbados	John White	August 2001
Belize	Alan Jones	November 2004
Botswana	Frank Martin	October 2005
Brunei	John Saville	May 2005
Cameroon	Richard Wildash	July 2002
Canada	David Reddaway	August 2003
Cyprus	Peter Millett	June 2005
Dominica (NR)	John White (Resident Barbados)	August 2001
Fiji	Charles Mochan	December 2002
The Gambia	Eric Jenkinson	December 2002
Ghana	Gordon Wetherell	March 2004
Grenada (NR)	John White (Resident Barbados)	August 2001
Guyana	Stephen Hiscock	August 2002
India	Sir Michael Arthur	October 2003
Jamaica	Jeremy Cresswell	July 2005
Kenya	Adam Wood	July 2005
Kiribati (NR)	Charles Mochan (Resident Fiji)	December 2002
Lesotho (NR)	Right hon. Paul Boateng (Resident South Africa)	August 2005
Malawi	David Pearey	November 2004
Malaysia	Bruce Cleghorn	November 2001
Maldives (NR)	Stephen Evans (Resident Sri Lanka)	August 2002
Malta	Vincent Fean	September 2002
Mauritius	Anthony Godson	November 2004
Mozambique	Howard Parkinson	December 2003
Namibia	Alasdair MacDermott	April 2002
Nauru (NR)	Charles Mochan (Resident Fiji)	December 2002
New Zealand	Richard Fell	December 2001
Nigeria	Richard Gozney	June 2004
Pakistan	Mark Lyall Grant	May 2003
Papua New Guinea	David Gordon-Macleod	November 2003
Samoa (NR)	Richard Fell (Resident Wellington)	December 2001
Seychelles	Diana Skingle	July 2004
Sierra Leone	John Mitchiner	August 2003
Singapore	Alan Collins	December 2002
Solomon Islands	Richard Lyne	November 2004
South Africa	Right hon. Paul Boateng	August 2005
Sri Lanka	Stephen Evans	August 2002
St. Kitts and Nevis (NR)	John White (Resident Barbados)	August 2001
St. Lucia (NR)	John White (Resident Barbados)	August 2001
St. Vincent and The Grenadines (NR)	John White (Resident Barbados)	August 2001
Swaziland (NR)	Right hon. Paul Boateng (Resident South Africa)	August 2005
Tanzania	Dr. Andrew Pocock	October 2003
Tonga	Paul Nessling	January 2002
Trinidad and Tobago	Ron Nash	January 2004
Tuvalu (NR)	Charles Mochan (Resident Fiji)	December 2002
Uganda	(Jean) Francois Gordon	July 2005
Vanuatu	Joel Watson (Acting High Commissioner) (High Commissioner departed August 2005. Post due to close February 2006)	August 2005
Zambia	Alistair Harrison	August 2002

Uzbekistan

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Government of Uzbekistan concerning human rights abuses, with particular regard to the arrest of Mutubar Tadzhibaeva; and if he will make a statement. [18577]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We remain deeply concerned by the reports of ongoing human rights abuses in Uzbekistan, including the mistreatment of human rights defenders and others, and take every opportunity to raise this issue with the Uzbek Government.

We made our most recent representation on 14 October. In a diplomatic note, passed by our Embassy in Tashkent to the Uzbek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we expressed our alarm at the reported treatment of three human rights defenders. One of these was the recently arrested Mukhtabar Tojibaeva; we have requested clarification of the charges brought against her. The Other two were Elena Urlaeva and Shavkat Madumarov. We have asked the Uzbek Government to confirm that all three are being treated in a manner compliant with international standards.

We will continue, both bilaterally and through international institutions such as the EU and The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe,

to encourage Uzbekistan to take greater steps towards full respect for human rights, and stand ready to provide any necessary assistance.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost has been of stationing UK troops in Afghanistan in each year since the operation began. [14449]

Mr. Ingram: The net additional costs of operations in Afghanistan are published each year in the MOD's Annual Report and Accounts. Costs for financial year 2001–02 were £221 million, 2002–03 £311 million and for 2003–04 £46 million. The provisional figures for 2004–05 total £67 million. However, these are subject to scrutiny by the National Audit Office and final figures will be published in the MOD's Annual Report and Accounts in the autumn.

Airlift Capacity

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the projected cost is of new airlift capacity up to 2015. [12677]

Mr. Ingram: The projected cost of the A400M programme which passed Main Gate in 2000 and is expected to enter service in 2011, is approximately £2 billion up to 2014–15. Other programmes to increase our airlift capacity remain in their Assessment Phases, and it is too early to provide costs for them.

Apache Helicopters

Mr. Scott: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many AH-64 Apache helicopters are operational. [18393]

Mr. Ingram: As at 12 October 2005, 37 Apache Mk 1 helicopters were being held by operational and training units. The departmental fleet comprises a total of 67 Apache. The remaining aircraft are currently being held by the Defence Logistics Organisation (DLO) for storage, or trials, or are scheduled for routine maintenance.

Armed Forces Deployment

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list those Army units who have been deployed to Iraq on *(a)* one occasion, *(b)* two occasions, *(c)* three occasions and *(d)* four or more occasions respectively. [18052]

Mr. Ingram: The information relating to those fully formed Army Units (i.e. Regiment/Battalion level and above) that have deployed to Iraq from February 2003 to date can be found in the following list:

One occasion:

Headquarters 1st (United Kingdom) Armoured Division and Signal Regiment
Headquarters 3rd (United Kingdom) Division and Signal Regiment
Headquarters 1st Mechanical Brigade and Signal Squadron
Headquarters 12th Mechanised Brigade and Signal Squadron
Headquarters 19th Mechanised Brigade and Signal Squadron
Headquarters 20th Armoured Brigade and Signal Squadron
Headquarters 16 Air Assault Brigade and Signal Squadron
Headquarters 101 Logistic Brigade and Signal Squadron
Headquarters 102 Logistic Brigade and Signal Squadron
The King's Royal Hussars
The Royal Dragoon Guards
The Queen's Royal Lancers
2nd Royal Tank Regiment
1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery
4th Regiment Royal Artillery
12th Regiment Royal Artillery
19th Regiment Royal Artillery
40th Regiment Royal Artillery
21 Engineer Regiment
22 Engineer Regiment
26 Engineer Regiment
33 Engineer Regiment
35 Engineer Regiment
38 Engineer Regiment
39 Engineer Regiment
64 Works Group Royal Engineers
2 Signal Regiment
7 Signal Regiment
16 Signal Regiment
1st Battalion Coldstream Guards
1st Battalion Scots Guards
1st Battalion Irish Guards
1st Battalion Welsh Guards
1st Battalion The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment)
1st Battalion The King's Own Scottish Borderers
1st Battalion The Highlanders
1st Battalion The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment
2nd Battalion The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment
1st Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment
1st Battalion The King's Own Royal Border Regiment
1st Battalion The King's Regiment
1st Battalion The Cheshire Regiment
1st Battalion The Staffordshire Regiment
1st Battalion The Royal Welsh Fusiliers
1st Battalion The Light Infantry
2nd Battalion The Light Infantry
1st Battalion The Royal Green Jackets
4th Regiment Army Air Corps
4 Logistic Support Regiment Royal Logistics Corps
6 Supply Regiment Royal Logistic Corps
9 Supply Regiment Royal Logistic Corps
10 Transport Regiment Royal Logistic Corps
11 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Regiment Royal Logistic Corps
13 Air Assault Support Regiment Royal Logistic Corps
24 Regiment Royal Logistic Corps
27 Transport Regiment Royal Logistic Corps
29 Regiment Royal Logistic Corps

4 General Support Medical Regiment Royal Army Medical Corps
16 Close Support Medical Regiment Royal Army Medical Corps
22 Field Hospital
33 Field Hospital
34 Field Hospital
1st Battalion Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers
5th Battalion Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers
6th Battalion Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers
4th Regiment Royal Military Police

Two Occasions:

Headquarters 4th Armoured Brigade and Signal Squadron
Headquarters 7th Armoured Brigade and Signal Squadron
The Household Cavalry Regiment
1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards
The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers and Greys)
The Light Dragoons
9th/12th Royal Lancers (Prince of Wales's)
3rd Regiment Royal Horse Artillery
26th Regiment Royal Artillery
28 Engineer Regiment
32 Engineer Regiment
62 Works Group Royal Engineers
63 Works Group Royal Engineers
1st Battalion The Black Watch
1st Battalion The Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders
1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers
1st Battalion The Queen's Lancashire Regiment
1st Battalion The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding)
1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Wales
1st Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment
2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment
3rd Battalion The Parachute Regiment
2 Logistic Support Regiment Royal Logistic Corps
3 Logistic Support Regiment Royal Logistic Corps
7 Transport Regiment Royal Logistic Corps
8 Transport Regiment Royal Logistic Corps
23 Pioneer Regiment Royal Logistic Corps
1 Close Support Medical Regiment Royal Army Medical Corps
3 Close Support Medical Regiment Royal Army Medical Corps
5 General Support Medical Regiment Royal Army Medical Corps
1st Regiment Royal Military Police
3rd Regiment Royal Military Police

Three occasions:

Nil

Four occasions:

17 Port and Maritime Regiment Royal Logistics Corps

British Troop Deployment

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many British troops are in *(a)* Afghanistan, *(b)* Iraq, *(c)* Kosovo, *(d)* Bosnia and *(e)* Germany. [12566]

Mr. Ingram: The approximate number of British service personnel in the locations specified are as follows:

	Number
Afghanistan	900
Iraq	7,800
Kosovo	170
Bosnia-Herzegovina	740
Germany	21,800

Note:
All figures rounded.

The figures do not include personnel serving in loan/diplomatic posts, or training detachments.

Defence Procurement

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his policy is in respect of integrated project team leaders visiting bidders and potential suppliers outside the UK; and what records are kept of such visits. [13464]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has no specific policy in relation to visits by integrated project team leaders (IPTLs) to bidders or potential suppliers, regardless of their location. Visits to non-UK suppliers would be consistent with the principles of EC Public Procurement and MOD's Defence Industrial Policy, as outlined in MOD Policy Paper No. 5—Defence Industrial Policy, which encourages MOD to engage with suppliers from all sectors and nations with the aim of being more transparent and inclusive from the early stages of a procurement project thus enabling potential bidders to frame bids accordingly at the outset. Importantly, IPTLs need to acquire and maintain a global understanding and expertise in the market of their particular business area to maximise opportunities and technological benefits to create a healthy and competitive environment aimed at securing the best solutions and value for money for our acquisition requirements. Decisions to visit bidders and potential suppliers, or to undertake any other visits, are based on business requirements and are in accordance with the normal departmental travel and subsistence rules. Travel and subsistence costs must be authorised and records maintained as appropriate for audit purposes.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps are taken to minimise the *(a)* time taken and *(b)* costs incurred by bidders on defence procurement contracts; and under what circumstances (i) all and (ii) part of the bid costs would be met by his Department. [13465]

Mr. Ingram: The MOD's policy is not to pay bid costs. However, it is in the interests of MOD and industry to minimise the time and costs of tendering. MOD makes every effort to do this through a well established selective tendering process aimed at choosing the tender offering the most effective solution and best value for money. The general policy includes normally inviting a maximum of six bidders, specifying tender assessment criteria designed to facilitate early decision-making and a structured selection procedure to "preferred bidder". The process was recently reviewed and continues to be monitored for effectiveness. The newly formed more effective contracting initiative applies a phased approach to contractual commitment and provides for the option of early down-selection during the assessment phase.

Defence Weaponry (Space)

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will make a statement on the Government's policy on weapons in space; [19078]

(2) what plans the Government have *(a)* to support and *(b)* to promote the establishment of a new comprehensive space treaty which would include matters relating to weapons in space; [19076]

(3) whether the Government *(a)* own and *(b)* contract defence weaponry in space. [19077]

Mr. Ingram: The focus of the UK Government's space policy is on civil and scientific uses. However, we also derive important security benefits from its military use. Like many countries, the UK uses satellites for a wide range of military functions such as secure communications, meteorological predictions, and effective monitoring of various arms control treaties.

Although the military use of space is integral to our security responsibilities, the UK Government have no plans to deploy weapons in space. As one of the depository states (along with the US and Russia), the UK Government continue to fully support the 1967 Outer Space treaty, which places important constraints on the use of space, including prohibiting the development of weapons of mass destruction in space and military activity on the moon and other celestial bodies.

The main forum for discussing the military use of space is the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. We have taken part in informal discussions on the possibility of a further treaty banning weapons in space, although there has been no international consensus on the need for such a treaty. We continue to support the annual resolution on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS) at the UN.

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the United Kingdom operates a defence mechanism for the protection of UK satellites in space. [19079]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence does not operate any defence mechanisms to protect UK satellites in space.

Departmental Purchasing

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the companies from which his Department has purchased goods and services of a total value above £1 million in each of the last three years; and how much was spent in respect of each company. [11738]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has extracted spend information from the Defence Bills Agency database covering companies from which the Department has purchased goods and services totalling more than £1 million in each of the last three financial years.

A copy of this information will be placed in the Library of the House.

Departmental Rebranding

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much has been spent on rebranding in his Department and related agencies in each of the last five years. [18326]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence has not undergone a corporate level rebranding exercise in the past five years. While parts of the Department have engaged in work to ensure that their brand identities are current and relevant to their business needs, detailed information on this could be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

Estate Disposals

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's targets for disposals of *(a)* land and *(b)* buildings in Hampshire are in the 2005–06 financial year; and if he will list the assets to be disposed of. [18576]

Mr. Touhig: We currently expect receipts in excess of £16.5 million from the disposal of both land and buildings in Hampshire during financial year 2005–06. We do not release details of individual site valuations for commercial reasons, as this might influence the market.

Current lists of sites for release in Hampshire are as follows:

Former HMS Daedalus

Fleet Photographic Unit Tipner

House adj Clayhall Cemetery, Gosport

OFD Gosport—small sale, regularisation of boundaries

Rowner Footbridge, Gosport

RMA Eastney—sale of small area of land

Land at Calshot

Pumphouse Site, Church Crookham

Five garages in Lancaster Way, Hawley, Farnborough.

Former DMC Armament Depot Dean Hill

Land at Union building, Hospital Hill Aldershot

English Churhces Housing Group Hostal Site Aldershot

Release of restricted covenants on various properties in Military Road, Gosport

Export Support Team

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost of the export support team was last year; and what the forecast cost is for each of the next two years. [13457]

Mr. Ingram: Net operating costs of the export support teams last year were approximately £2 million. Provision of £1.75 million has been made for manpower costs for the current year. Provision for next year has not yet been finalised, but is currently projected to be approximately £0.3 million lower than in 2005–06. These figures reflect a reduced manpower requirement, following a decision last year to merge a number of teams into one.

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 27 June 2005, *Official Report*,

columns 1204–05W, on Iraq, whether the British deputy senior judge advocate in Iraq told his British superiors about the Red Cross report he summarised. [9090]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 4 July 2005]:* A copy of the November ICRC report, together with a summary were sent by the British officer to a number of senior staff within CJTF-7, including to the office of the senior British military representative—Iraq (SBMR(I), who was located in a different HQ from the British deputy SJA. We have not been able to ascertain whether that report ever arrived, and the then SBMR(I) did not read the report or the summary.

However, SBMR-I was briefed on the ICRC report, together with Lt Gen Sanchez, by US personnel. That briefing did not raise major concerns about abuse at Abu Ghraib. Issues of "mishandling" were raised, but it was made clear that direction had already been given that such practices should stop. Further concerns were raised about record keeping and procedures for informing the relatives of internees of their whereabouts. SBMR-I directed that these procedures should be reviewed, and improvements made.

SBMR-I was not aware of the detail of the November ICRC report, and was not aware of specific allegations of abuse at Abu Ghraib.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the activities of British armed forces in Basra on 20 September. [19491]

John Reid: I refer my hon. Friend to the statement I made to the House on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 24–27.

Merlin Helicopters

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Merlin helicopters are in operation with the Royal Navy, broken down by *(a)* condition and *(b)* age. [18054]

Mr. Ingram: The Royal Navy has 23 Merlin helicopters in operation. This is in line with the current operational plan. The status of these helicopters as at 12 October 2005 is as follows:

Aircraft	*Status*	*Age*[1]
RN18 ZH838	Undergoing maintenance post engine change	28 October 1999
RN22 ZH842	Serviceable	1 March 2000
RN16 ZH836	Undergoing maintenance	19 August 1999
RN35 ZH855	Undergoing routine maintenance	28 June 2001
RN40 ZH860	Undergoing routine maintenance	26 March 2002
RN43 ZH863	Serviceable	9 August 2002
RN08 ZH828	Serviceable	28 August 1998
RN21 ZH841	Under technical investigation	29 January 2000
RN23 ZH843	Undergoing routine maintenance	13 April 2000
RN42 ZH862	Serviceable	26 June 2002
RN44 ZH864	Serviceable	4 October 2002
RN11 ZH831	Undergoing routine maintenance	29 January 1999
RN15 ZH835	Undergoing routine maintenance	9 August 1999
RN19 ZH839	Undergoing maintenance	24 November 1999
RN26 ZH846	Serviceable	16 August 2000
RN29 ZH849	Serviceable	15 December 2000
RN41 ZH861	Undergoing routine maintenance	14 May 2002
RN17 ZH837	Undergoing maintenance post storage	24 September 1999
RN28 ZH848	Serviceable	8 November 2000
RN30 ZH850	Serviceable	21 December 2000
RN31 ZH851	Serviceable	2 March 2001
RN32 ZH852	Serviceable	29 March 2001
RN37 ZH857	Serviceable	5 October 2001

[1] This relates to the first time an aircraft's rotors are engaged.

Of the 11 aircraft out of service on 12 October all but four were expected to re-enter service within one to three days.

Military Personnel

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* trained strength and *(b)* trained requirement is of the UK (i) regular armed forces, (ii) reserve forces and (iii) Territorial Army. [18298]

Mr. Ingram: The most recent available trained strength and requirement figures for UK regular and reserve forces are given in the following table:

Trained strengths and requirements at 1 September 2005

	Naval service		*Army*		*RAF*	
	Requirement	*Strength*	*Requirement*	*Strength*	*Requirement*[1]	*Strength*
UK Regulars	37,450	35,030	98,710	97,980	48,400	48,420
FTRS—total[2]	—	800	—	440	350	340
FTRS (FC)[2]	—	340	—	110	—	70
FTRS (LC)[2]	—	240	—	70	220	180
FTRS (HC)[2]	—	220	—	260	130	90
Regular Reserve[3, 4, 5]	—	9,930	—	31,660	—	7,960
Volunteer Reserve (part-time)[5]	—	—	—	—	2,120	1,380
Volunteer Reserve (full-time)[5, 6]	3,890	2,980	41,610	36,630	90	100

[1] Figures for RAF Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) and Volunteer Reserves are establishment not requirement.

[2] FTRS strength figures include Full Commitment (FC), Home Commitment (HC) and Limited Commitment (LC) individuals. For the Army, FC and LC individuals serve against the requirement while HC individuals fill posts specifically for FTRS personnel. For the RAF, FC individuals serve against the regular requirement while HC and LC individuals fill posts specifically for FTRS personnel.

[3] There is no requirement for Regular Reserves.

[4] The Army Regular Reserve exclude RARO V.

[5] The Regular Reserve include 120 mobilised Army personnel and 10 mobilised RAF personnel. The Volunteer Reserve include 30 mobilised Naval Service personnel, 1,120 mobilised Army personnel and 40 mobilised RAF personnel.

[6] The RAF Volunteer Reserve (Full Time) have a strength of 100 against a requirement of 90, but are already included in RAF FTRS figures.

Nimrod

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on plans for the replacement or upgrade of the Nimrod. [12710]

Mr. Ingram: There are two types of the Nimrod aircraft currently in service. The Nimrod MR2 is a maritime reconnaissance aircraft and is planned to be replaced by the Nimrod MRA4. Flight trials of the MRA4 are progressing. A production proposal was submitted by BAE Systems earlier this month, and is being considered by the Ministry of Defence. A production contract will depend on an assessment that the design is mature enough to enter production and on agreement of an affordable price.

The Nimrod R1 is an electronic reconnaissance aircraft that examines radio and radar emissions. We are assessing cost effective solutions to our requirement to maintain this capability, including whether to upgrade or replace the aircraft.

Panther Command and Liaison Vehicle

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the unit production cost, broken down by *(a)* indirect resource departmental expenditure limit, *(b)* direct resource departmental expenditure limit and *(c)* capital departmental expenditure limit, is for the Panther command and liaison vehicle; [13275]

(2) what the cost, broken down by *(a)* indirect resource departmental expenditure limit, *(b)* direct resource departmental expenditure limit and *(c)* capital departmental expenditure limit is for the Panther command and liaison vehicle contract. [13276]

Mr. Ingram: The current Unit Production Cost for the two variants of the Panther command and liaison vehicle is £320,000 and £240,000 (excluding VAT). These figures are capital departmental expenditure limit (CDEL) only. Development costs are excluded from the figures as are indirect resource expenditure limit (RDEL Indirect) costs, comprising a notional cost of capital charge, which for each variant is currently assessed at £15,000 and £12,000 per vehicle respectively.

The current cost to bring the Panther command and liaison vehicle into service is as follows: *(a)* indirect resource departmental expenditure limit of some £6 million, *(b)* direct resource departmental expenditure limit of some £2.5 million, and *(c)* capital departmental expenditure limit of £166 million, with further contracts envisaged to a total value reaching £193 million.

Public Service Agreement Target

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what metrics have been established for measuring the Department's success in achieving public service agreement objective II; and what weighting has been assigned to training projects (AVTS, DTR, RSME) in terms of contributing to the achievement of this objective. [14751]

Mr. Ingram: The way in which public service agreement targets are measured is set out in the technical notes that support the agreement. The technical notes for the MOD'S public service agreements for 2003–04 to 2005–06 and for 2005–06 to 2006–07 are published on the MOD and Treasury websites.

QinetiQ

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what guaranteed funding QinetiQ is due to receive from his Department's science and technology budget over the next five years. [16835]

Mr. Ingram: With the progressive introduction of competition to the majority of the Ministry of Defence's science and technology budget since 2001, the proportion of single tender work awarded to QinetiQ has diminished and will continue to do so. The NAO report "The Management of Defence Research and Technology" published on 10 March 2004 shows how competition will affect QinetiQ's share of the elements of the research programme that equated to applied and corporate research. QinetiQ's assured share of these elements of the research programme will decline over time, dropping to less than 10 percent. by financial year 2008–09. We currently have about £80 million pounds work on contract with QinetiQ through single tender action for the Department's science and technology budget over the period of financial years 2006–07 to 2008–09. This figure is of course subject to change as new contracts are placed.

RAF

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he last discussed the state of the RAF with the Chief of Air Staff. [19246]

Mr. Ingram: As the Secretary of State's principal adviser on Royal Air Force issues the Chief of the Air Staff has direct access to Defence Ministers whenever he requires and Defence Ministers regularly meet him in a variety of forums.

Royal Navy

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list *(a)* the reasons for designating each of the Royal Navy ships referred to in his written answer of 13 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1080W, for reduced support status, with special reference to HMS Albion and HMS St. Albans, *(b)* the age of each of these vessels and *(c)* the time it would take to bring each of them to a state of readiness to serve with the fleet if required. [14646]

Mr. Ingram: Ships are selected for reduced support status according to their future tasking within the operational programme, taking into account its position within the upkeep cycle. This was the case for HMS Albion and HMS St. Albans. No ships have ceased to be operational as a result of reduced support status. The age of the ships listed in the following table has been calculated from their original acceptance in rounded years.

	Years
HMS Invincible	25
HMS Ark Royal	20
HMS Albion	2
HMS Cardiff	26

	Years
HMS Exeter	25
HMS Liverpool	23
HMS Cumberland	16
HMS Grafton	9
HMS Marlborough	14
HMS Monmouth	12
HMS Richmond	11
HMS St. Albans	4
HMS Sutherland	8
HMS Atherstone	19
HMS Brecon	25
HMS Cottesmore	22
HMS Dulverton	22
HMS Middleton	21
HMS Pembroke	7
HMS Penzance	7
HMS Ramsey	5
HMS Shoreham	4
HMS Walney	13
HMS Leeds Castle	24

Submarine IT Systems

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on the potential for Alfred McAlpine Business Systems to become a supplier of strategically important components to the Government. [17650]

Mr. Ingram: The Secretary of State has regular discussions with his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (DTI) on a wide range of procurement and industry issues including most recently matters such as the Defence Industrial Strategy. No discussions have taken place about the potential for Alfred McAlpine Business Services to become a supplier of strategically important components to the Government.

Trident

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what ongoing contractual obligations the United States has to service *(a)* Trident submarines and *(b)* their nuclear payloads; and if he will make a statement. [19062]

John Reid: The United States has no contractual obligations for servicing UK Trident submarines and their nuclear payloads, as these are the responsibility of the UK Government.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will publish the options for the replacement of the Trident fleet together with projected costs in each case. [19063]

John Reid: Decisions on any replacement for Trident have not yet been taken. Such decisions are likely to be necessary in the current Parliament, although they are still some way off. Initial preparatory work is being undertaken by officials on possible options for the future of the UK's nuclear deterrent. However, Ministers have not yet begun to consider the position on this issue in any detail. It is therefore premature to speculate on the range of options that might be available and their potential costs.

UK Troops (Belize)

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many UK troops will be stationed in Belize in December. [14790]

John Reid: We anticipate that there will be some 80 armed forces personnel stationed in Belize in December 2005.

Ulster Defence Regiment/Royal Irish Regiment

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many people are known to have served in *(a)* the Ulster Defence Regiment and *(b)* the Royal Irish Regiment home service battalions in the last 30 years in a (i) part-time and (ii) full-time capacity. [18917]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to Table 7.4 of United Kingdom Defence Statistics 2005, a copy of which is held in the Library of the House.

Welfare

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the welfare provided by the Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes. [19138]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 18 October 2005]:* Since its inception in 1921, the Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes (NAFFI) have provided armed forces personnel worldwide with retail and leisure facilities (shops and junior ranks' clubs). Support to operations is provided by the Expeditionary Force Institutes (EFI) arm of NAFFI, and support to HM ships is provided by the Naval Canteen Service (NCS).

NAFFI profits are held in trust for the armed forces and are returned to welfare funds by way of dividend payments. The dividend payments in respect of 2003–04 profits totalled £3.75 million. For 2004–05, an interim dividend payment of £0.5 million has already been made; agreement of the final dividend for 2004–05 is imminent.

Withdrawn Military Equipment

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many tanks are expected to be withdrawn from service in 2005–06. [12513]

Mr. Ingram: Under the Future Army Structures (FAS) there will be a shift from the current mix of light and heavy forces to a more balanced structure of light, medium and heavy forces. As part of the implementation of FAS we are reducing the number of Challenger 2 (CR2) armoured squadrons from 25 to 18. The reduction in the number of squadrons has reduced the total requirement for tanks and 20 CR2 have so far been withdrawn from service. We have no plans at present to reduce the number further during 2005–06.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Abortion

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will clarify and consolidate statute relating to abortion in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [10587]

Mr. Woodward: Abortion Law in Northern Ireland is contained in the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 the Criminal Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 1945, and case law, particularly the Bourne judgement (1938). There are no plans for any changes in the legislate position at present.

Anaesthetists

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps his Department is taking to ensure that trained assistance is provided for anaesthetists. [11770]

Mr. Woodward: The Department is committed to ensuring that staff providing assistance to anaesthetists are fully trained and are competent to practice. The Department currently commissions post-registration programmes at different levels to complement the in-house training provided by the trusts. In addition, the Department is carrying out a peri-operative review of work force needs in Northern Ireland, which will examine the need for Operating Department Practitioners and other theatre roles within the theatre and anaesthetics service.

Breast Cancer

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of patients referred by their general practitioner with suspected breast cancer was assessed by a specialist within two weeks at each trust within the Province in the last period for which figures are available. [10956]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not currently available. I refer the hon. Lady to an audit of Breast Cancer Services in Northern Ireland produced by the Northern Ireland Cancer Registry, which is found at: http://www.qub.ac.uk/nicr/pdf/publications/audit_breast.pdf

The audit reported that for patients diagnosed with Breast Cancer in 2001, the majority (69 per cent.) of patients were seen within two weeks of being referred by their GP.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of patients in each health trust was treated for breast cancer within six weeks in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [10957]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the treatment of breast cancer is not collected centrally. I refer the hon. Member to an audit of Breast Cancer Services in Northern Ireland produced by the Northern Ireland Cancer Registry which is found at: http://www.qub.ac.uk/nicr/pdf/publications/audit_breast.pdf

A table containing a summary of waiting times experienced by breast cancer patients can be found on page 22.

CCTV

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have been arrested or questioned regarding a crime which was caught on CCTV cameras in each of the four Belfast Westminster constituencies in each of the last five years. [18100]

Mr. Hain: The Chief Constable has advised me that the Police Service of Northern Ireland does not record statistics by parliamentary constituency. The available information for the four Belfast District Command Units (DCUs) is as follows:

Belfast, West—The DCU does not have a police monitored CCTV system;

Belfast, East—The DCU have recorded 93 arrests for various offences that can be attributed to the presence of CCTV which was installed in 2003;

Belfast, North—The DCU only collate statistics in respect of CCTV associated arrests related to public order incidents. Since installation in 2002, 230 arrests have been linked to CCTV monitoring. Of those, 200 have resulted in convictions and the remaining 30 are pending interview or charge;

Belfast, South—The DCU have a long established CCTV system which is designed for wider usage than in Belfast, North. Between October 2000 and September 2005, 2,451 arrests have been made in Belfast, South that are attributable to the presence of CCTV.

Community Paediatric Clinics

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many community paediatric clinics employ staff qualified in child and adolescent mental health in *(a)* North Belfast and *(b)* West Belfast. [9483]

Mr. Woodward: The North and West Belfast HSS Trust has one paediatric clinic, which provides a trust wide service across North and West Belfast.

Cystic Fibrosis

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on services for cystic fibrosis sufferers in the Province. [11085]

Mr. Woodward: Patients suffering from cystic fibrosis may access services in both primary care and hospital settings. Specialised regional services for children with cystic fibrosis are provided at the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children, while specialised regional services for adults are provided at the Belfast City Hospital.

Northern Ireland has one of the best survival rates among cystic fibrosis sufferers in the United Kingdom, and outcomes are comparable to the best cystic fibrosis centres in the world. This may be attributed to early diagnosis, with neonatal screening in place in Northern Ireland for over 20 years, and to the expert care provided by clinical staff, particularly in the specialist centres.

The management of patients with cystic fibrosis requires a multidisciplinary team approach. A major objective of treatment is to promote enhanced self-management and to enable people to maximise their health and well being in the community. This is supported by general and specialised services as required, and tailored to the individual patient's needs.

Cytology

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the *(a)* accuracy and *(b)* effectiveness of cervical cancer screening in the Province. [11073]

Mr. Woodward: The information is as follows.

(a) Within the cervical screening programme there are internal and external quality assurance systems which measure the performance of the programme against agreed national standards. The data for 2002–03 (the most recent year available) show that the Northern Ireland programme is meeting the national standards, in all board areas.

(b) The number of cervical cancers diagnosed each year in Northern Ireland and the number of deaths attributed to this form of cancer are relatively small—about 80 new cases and 30 deaths. With such small numbers it is difficult to prove effectiveness but over the last few years there has been a small but gradual decline in the number of deaths here. However figures for England, Scotland and Wales show a sizeable reduction in death numbers, a situation which contrasts with the Republic of Ireland which does not have a comprehensive population-based screening programme. In addition it is noteworthy that there has been an improvement in the five year survival rate which is now 72 per cent. compared to 61 per cent. 10 years ago.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to introduce human papilloma virus testing in the Province for screening against cervical cancer. [11074]

Mr. Woodward: The role of human papilloma virus (HPV) testing in screening for cervical cancer is still under consideration by the National Screening Committee, which advises Health Ministers and the UK Health Departments on screening policy.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what advice he has received from the Department's regional sub-group regarding introducing liquid-based cytology screening in the Province for cervical cancer. [11075]

Mr. Woodward: The Regional Advisory Group on Cervical Screening has recommended to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety that the cervical screening programme here should adopt the new technology known as liquid-based cytology (LBC). This is already being rolled out in other parts of the UK. The Department is currently seeking to identify funding to make the new technology available in each Board area here, as soon as possible.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland where in the Province pilot schemes have been operating of liquid-based cytology screening. [11076]

Mr. Woodward: There have been no pilot schemes set up in Northern Ireland. It is the Department's intention to introduce liquid based cytology into the cervical screening programme as soon as the necessary funding can be identified.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which boards have commenced pilot schemes of liquid-based cytology screening. [11077]

Mr. Woodward: Health and Social Services Boards have not introduced any pilot schemes using liquid-based cytology to the cervical screening programme.

Dementia

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many residential care places are available in the Province for individuals with early onset dementia. [10962]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not available centrally.

Disabled Drivers

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in Northern Ireland have official disability vehicle stickers. [19550]

Mr. Woodward: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin to Peter Robinson, dated 20 October 2005:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about how many people in Northern Ireland have official disability vehicle stickers. I have been asked to reply as the issue raised falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

I can advise you that there are currently 79,885 Blue Badges issued to individuals. A further 218 Badges have been issued to organisations who care for people with a disability.

I hope this information is helpful.

Eastern Health and Social Services Board

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the Eastern Health and Social Services Board has sought a business case for implementing new IT systems. [11084]

Mr. Woodward: I refer the hon. Lady to my answer of 14 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 321W.

Faith-based Projects (Funding)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding was provided to faith-based *(a)* groups and *(b)* projects in Northern Ireland over the last five years, broken down by (i) Westminster parliamentary constituency and (ii) district council area. [18015]

Mr. Hanson: Government in Northern Ireland recognise the valuable contribution that faith based organisations have made to community life, local regeneration and the provision of a wide range of social activities.

The nature of the information sought is not available as prior to April 2004 Departments did not specifically categorise support to church or faith based groups they were recorded as voluntary community groups. From April 2004 with the establishment of the Northern Ireland Government funding database Departments are now recording the nature of organisations, their activity focus and geographical area of operation. The following table lists funding since 2004 to those organisations which have identified themselves as faith based groups and which council area they operate in. This does not include organisations that may have designated

themselves as charitable, voluntary or community groups which however are led by faith based organisations.

The database is still being populated by Departments. It will be possible in future years to provide more comprehensive information.

Organisation name	Council	Grant title	Financial year	Award amount (£)
Religion				
Harmony Community Trust Strangford	Down	Good Relations	2004-05	62,642.00
			2005-06	68,430.00
			2006-07	70,370.00
Religious activities				
Board of Social Witness	Belfast	Core Funding 2004-05 to 2006-07	2004-05	43,324.00
			2005-06	44,624.00
			2006-07	0.00
Church of Ireland Board for Social Responsibility	Belfast	DHSSPS Core Grant Church of Ireland 2003 to 2006	2005-06	67,826.00
			2003-04	64,244.00
			2004-05	65,850.00
Churches Community Work Alliance	Belfast	Revenue Core Funding	2003-04	47,420.00
			2004-05	46,036.00
			2005-06	46,378.00
Citywide Enterprise Ltd. (Twin Spires)	Lisburn	Cemetery Regeneration Project	2002-03	24,359.83
			2003-04	20,962.49
Greenhill YMCA	Down	Greenhill YMCA	2003-04	100,000.00
			2004-05	60,000.00
Mothers Hope Crisis Centre	Belfast	Salaries, Running Cost, Refurbishment FW/P/35/03	2004-05	81,658.13
			2005-06	0.00
			2006-07	0.87
Willowfield Parish Community Association	Belfast	Provision of community facility NR2/SE/P/54/04	2005-06	0.00
			2006-07	0.00
St. Columba's Project	—	Developing Community Capacity	2004-05	11,704.00
Total				925,835.67

Fire Service

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many firefighters were operating in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years, broken down by sex. [19455]

Mr. Woodward: The numbers of male and female firefighters in the Service over the past five years are as follows:

	Male	Female
Whole-time personnel		
2001	885	2
2002	878	5
2003	884	10
2004	869	11
2005	889	12
Retained personnel		
2001	893	3
2002	928	3
2003	871	2
2004	950	4
2005	939	4

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many fire fighters have been injured in the line of duty in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [19457]

Mr. Woodward: The number of firefighters injured while on duty over the past five years is as follows:

April to March	Number of firefighters injured
2000-01	427
2001-02	402
2002-03	354
2003-04	291
2004-05	240

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many operational fire stations there were in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [19456]

Mr. Woodward: In each of the past five years there were 67 operational fire stations in Northern Ireland.

Health Boards

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many procedures each health board in the Province has bought from *(a)* within and *(b)* outside the Province in each of the last five years; what the resultant costs were; and which trusts benefited from these resources. [10966]

Mr. Woodward: The following tables set out how many procedures each health board has purchased from within and outside the province in each of the last five years and the resultant costs.

2000–01

	Procedures purchased		
Board	*in NI*	*outside NI*	*Cost (£)*
EHSSB	—	54	410,000
NHSSB	[1]n/a	[1]n/a	n/a
SHSSB	204	128	398,648
WHSSB	1,103	32	780,000
Total	1,307	214	1,588648

[1] Figures for Northern Board are not available for 2000–01

2001–02

	Procedures purchased		
Board	*in NI*	*outside NI*	*Cost (£)*
EHSSB	72	1,048	1,344,000
NHSSB	344	54	751,765
SHSSB	39	48	429,000
WHSSB	1,225	[1]317	1,513,000
Total	1,680	1,467	4,037,765

[1] Figure includes MRI scans.

2002–03

	Procedures purchased		
Board	*in NI*	*outside NI*	*Cost (£)*
EHSSB	461	183	2,056,000
NHSSB	767	119	1,541,423
SHSSB	128	96	891,784
WHSSB	2,808	59	2,106,000
Total	4,164	457	6,595,207

2003–04

	Procedures purchased		
Board	*in NI*	*outside NI*	*Cost (£)*
EHSSB	98	81	1,428,000
NHSSB	1,488	133	3,102,800
SHSSB	637	73	1,779,502
WHSSB	3,830	91	4,324,000
Total	6,053	378	10,634,302

2004–05

	Procedures purchased		
Board	*in NI*	*outside NI*	*Cost (£)*
EHSSB	805	100	1,790,000
NHSSB	1,223	122	2,529,301
SHSSB	274	66	917,906
WHSSB	4,193	97	3,807,000
Total	6,495	385	9,044,207

The information provided above relates to transfers to and from a number of different hospitals over the five years.

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many complaints were made against each health board in each of the last three years. [19571]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is in the table.

	EHSSB	*NHSSB*	*SHSSB*	*WHSSB*
2004–05	66	5	33	2
2003–04	31	4	29	2
2002–03	55	4	54	1

Health Finance

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which health trusts in the Province have commenced their own internal bank staff system; and what costs each has incurred *(a)* setting up, *(b)* staffing and *(c)* operating these systems in each of the last five years. [10355]

Mr. Woodward: Bank staffing arrangements are in place across a number of services and professions across health trusts. Bank nursing systems are the most significant and widespread of these, and are in place at all trusts providing acute services. For most trusts the operation and management of bank staff systems is not readily divisible from their normal workforce management functions. Further information concerning costs of either the bank staff themselves or running such systems could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Hip Replacements

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people are awaiting hip replacement surgery in each of the health boards in Northern Ireland. [19558]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the number of patients awaiting hip replacement surgery is not collected centrally, however figures in the table show the number of people awaiting either hip or knee replacement surgery in each Health Board in Northern Ireland at 31 August 2005.

Number awaiting hip or knee replacement surgery by Health Board of Residence at 31 August 2005

Health Board of Residence	*Number waiting*
Eastern	892
Northern	569
Southern	416
Western	380
Northern Ireland	2,257

Source:
Hospital Information Branch

Hospital Beds

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many hospital beds there are within each health trust in Northern Ireland. [18033]

Mr. Woodward: Provisional figures for the average number of available hospital beds for each health trust in 2004–05 are given in the following table. Average available beds are defined as the average number of beds available during the quarter in wards that are open overnight, measured at midnight. Hospitals may also have a number of beds in wards, which are only open during the day. Beds reserved for day case admission or regular day admission are not included.

Average available beds by health trust 2004–05[1]

Trust	Number
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	524.2
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	359.7
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	774.8
Causeway HSS Trust	315.7
Craigavon Area Hospital HSS Trust	632.2
Craigavon and Banbridge Community HSS Trust	80.0
Down Lisburn HSS Trust	498.1
Foyle Community HSS Trust	282.0
Greenpark Healthcare HSS Trust	331.3
Homefirst Community HSS Trust	252.8
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	288.5
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	262.3
North and West Belfast HSS Trust	318.0
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	1,022.4
South and East Belfast HSS Trust	325.5
Sperrin Lakeland HSS Trust	307.0
Ulster Community and Hospitals HSS Trust	666.9
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust	881.3
Northern Ireland	8,322.8

[1] Provisional

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the percentage bed occupancy was in each hospital in Northern Ireland in each of the last 12 months. [18034]

Mr. Woodward: Figures for percentage bed occupancy are collected on a quarterly basis and provisional figures for 2004–05 are given in the following table. Note that day cases are excluded from the calculation for bed occupancy.

Percentage bed occupancy by quarter and hospital 2004–05[1]

Hospital	April to June 2004	July to September 2004	October to December 2004	January to March 2005	2004–05 total
Belfast City	84.6	86.0	86.9	89.1	86.6
Belvoir Park NICCO	88.8	85.8	85.3	86.3	86.5
Windsor House	98.9	99.7	99.4	98.9	99.5
Forest Lodge	71.0	80.0	72.2	70.0	73.7
Forster Green	62.9	65.3	64.3	60.1	63.2
Musgrave Park	75.4	70.4	78.0	80.6	76.0
Knockbracken Health Care Park	85.0	87.5	87.4	87.2	86.8
Shaftesbury Square	20.7	5.8	5.8	8.4	10.0
Young Peoples Centre	100.0	94.4	44.4	42.2	75.5
Ards	96.1	90.3	92.3	94.0	93.3
Bangor	92.0	85.0	85.6	90.2	88.3
Ulster	89.7	88.6	88.8	88.9	89.0
RBHSC	66.3	64.4	65.5	75.6	67.9
Royal Maternity	72.6	70.0	71.2	69.8	70.9
Royal Victoria	89.4	88.0	87.9	88.8	88.6
Mater Infirmorum	89.3	90.0	92.3	89.0	90.2
Muckamore Abbey	96.9	95.6	93.0	93.0	94.6
Downe	93.0	84.3	85.7	87.8	87.8
Downshire	100.0	80.6	100.0	100.0	97.0
Lagan Valley	83.2	81.6	80.3	82.7	81.9
Lagan Valley P.N.U	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Thompson House	96.9	97.8	93.1	92.2	95.0
Causeway	81.0	77.2	77.3	82.1	79.4
Dalriada	82.8	84.1	72.2	72.2	77.8
Robinson Memorial	83.6	78.8	82.0	74.0	79.6
Holywell	96.3	93.4	90.8	95.1	93.9
Whiteabbey P.N.U	94.7	98.4	77.4	98.9	92.6
Antrim	75.7	74.5	76.7	78.7	76.4
Braid Valley	91.1	94.8	92.6	96.6	93.8
Mid Ulster	76.4	72.0	73.4	76.6	74.5
Moyle	94.2	94.4	91.7	93.1	93.5
Whiteabbey	94.4	92.0	94.2	97.2	94.4
Longstone	93.0	93.4	86.2	85.2	89.4
Mullinure	92.8	90.3	81.1	81.1	86.4
Oaklands	65.0	61.4	59.6	62.3	63.2
St. Lukes	79.0	78.1	75.2	77.4	77.4
Banbridge[2]	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Craigavon Area	78.5	79.8	79.1	82.1	79.9
Lurgan	87.9	91.2	86.9	90.4	89.1
South Tyrone	94.1	87.8	97.6	89.0	92.2
Daisyhill	76.1	73.0	73.9	77.1	75.0
Craigavon P.N.U	97.5	95.9	92.3	90.9	94.1
Altnagelvin Area	81.3	78.7	79.6	83.6	80.8
Waterside	77.8	74.4	78.3	75.6	76.7
Gransha	92.4	90.8	87.9	90.4	90.4
Roe Valley	90.0	88.0	88.0	90.0	89.3
Stradeagh	93.5	94.1	96.3	89.6	93.4

Percentage bed occupancy by quarter and hospital 2004–05[1]

Hospital	April to June 2004	July to September 2004	October to December 2004	January to March 2005	2004–05 total
Waterside-Foyle	85.8	84.4	88.3	90.9	87.4
Erne	66.4	61.9	68.5	69.4	66.5
Tyrone and Fermanagh	83.3	82.1	81.8	85.9	83.2
Tyrone County	79.7	80.3	78.7	83.3	80.5
Northern Ireland	84.7	83.0	83.6	85.3	84.2

[1] Provisional
[2] Banbridge hospital only has day cases which are excluded from the calculation for bed occupancy.

Hospital Staff (Assaults)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many assaults there were on hospital staff on hospital premises in each health board in each of the last three years. [19570]

Mr. Woodward: There have been a total of 5,444 assaults, 3,065 Eastern Board, 650 Southern Board, 894 Northern Board and 835 Western Board, recorded against all HPSS staff during the period 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005. This is the earliest date for which these figures are held. Detailed information on the location where the incident took place is not recorded centrally and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Hospital Telephone Calls

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many whole-time equivalent receptionists are employed at the main switchboard of each of the hospitals in the Province. [10961]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is provided in the table as follows.

Number of whole-time equivalent receptionists employed at the main switchboard of each hospital in Northern Ireland as at 1 July 2005

Hospital	Whole-time equivalent
Altnagelvin area Hospital [1]	9.85
Antrim area Hospital[2]	5.51
Belfast City Hospital	8.08
Causeway Hospital	5.60
Craigavon area Hospital	8.20
Daisy Hill Hospital	7.09
Downpatrick Hospital	6.53
Erne hospital	3.01
Forster Green Hospital	4.50
Holywell Hospital	3.81
Knockbracken Hospital	5.28
Lagan Valley Hospital	5.28
Mater Hospital	6.37
Mid-Ulster Hospital[3]	3.66
Muckamore Hospital	5.00
Musgrave Park Hospital	6.00
Royal Hospital	10.00
South Tyrone[4]	3.53
St. Lukes[5]	5.47
Tyrone County Hospital	6.11
Ulster Hospital [6]	12.66
Whiteabbey Hospital[3]	5.01
Total	136.55

[1] Altnagelvin Area Hospital switchboard operators also deal with calls for Gransha Hospital, Stradreagh Hospital and Waterside Hospital.
[2] Antrim Area Hospital switchboard operators also deal with calls for Braid Valley Hospital and Moyle Hospital.
[3] Telephonist staff in Mid-Ulster Hospital and Whiteabbey Hospital also provide reception service.
[4] South Tyrone Hospital switchboard operators also deal with calls for Willowbank Voluntary Organisation and Thomas Street Clinic.
[5] St. Luke's Hospital switchboard operators also deal with calls for Armagh and Dungannon Health and Social Services Trust Headquarters and Southern Health and Social Services Board Headquarters.
[6] Ulster Hospital switchboard operators also deal with calls for Ards Hospital. Bangor Hospital is serviced from Ulster Community and Hospitals Group Trust headquarters.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many telephone lines there are for the main switchboard at the Royal Victoria hospital. [10958]

Mr. Woodward: There are 70 telephone lines for the main switchboard at the Royal Victoria hospital. The switchboard is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many receptionists there are on the main switchboard at the Royal Victoria hospital *(a)* on weekdays between 9 am and 5 pm, *(b)* on weekdays outside these hours, *(c)* between 9 am and 5 pm at weekends and *(d)* outside these hours at weekends. [10959]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is provided in the table as follows.

Number of receptionists employed at the main switchboard of the Royal Victoria hospital for specified hours as at 1 July 2005

Headcount

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday /Sunday
(a) Weekdays between 9am and 5pm						
9 am-1 pm	5	6	4	6	6	—
1 pm-2 pm	3	4	3	5	6	—
2 pm-5 pm	5	6	5	7	7.5	—
(b) Weekdays outside 9am and 5pm						
5 pm-9 pm	2	2	2	2	1.5	—
9 pm-9 am	2	2	2	2	2	—

Number of receptionists employed at the main switchboard of the Royal Victoria hospital for specified hours as at 1 July 2005

Headcount

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday /Sunday
(c) Weekends between 9 am and 5 pm	—	—	—	—	—	2
(d) Weekends between 5 pm and 9 pm	—	—	—	—	—	2

Influenza Vaccines

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what changes are planned to the *(a)* provision and *(b)* distribution of influenza vaccines in the Province. [10963]

Mr. Woodward: The Department of Health, social services and public safety has placed orders for influenza vaccine directly with three manufacturers for the 2005–06 immunisation programme through a process of central procurement. This differs from previous years where the responsibility for securing vaccine for Northern Ireland rested with independent GP and pharmacy contractors.

The arrangements for the distribution of the flu vaccine for the 2005–06 programme will involve direct supply of vaccine to GP surgeries from an appointed wholesaler. In previous years community pharmacists were involved in the distribution of vaccine from wholesaler premises to GP surgeries.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what extra facilities will be provided to assist general practitioner surgeries in the Province with the storage of increased numbers of influenza vaccines. [10964]

Mr. Woodward: There are no plans to provide extra storage facilities in GP practices for influenza vaccines. In view of the arrangements being made this year for the ordering and delivery of vaccine to GPs, the Department of Health, social services and public safety does not anticipate a need for any additional refrigerated capacity in surgeries.

Knife Attacks

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many violent attacks involving knives were recorded in Northern Ireland in each of the past three years; and what steps he is taking to reduce such incidents. [18906]

Mr. Hanson: The number of recorded offences involving knives in Northern Ireland from 2002–03 to 2004–05 is as follows:

	Number
2002–03	986
2003–04	985
2004–05	1,000

The Government have tabled an amendment to the Violent Crime Reduction Bill currently before Parliament to extend to Northern Ireland the proposal to further restrict the sale of knives to those aged 18 or over.

Marfan Syndrome

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what representations have been made to the Department from *(a)* medical staff and *(b)* others regarding provision for sufferers of Marfan syndrome in the Province. [11083]

Mr. Woodward: From 1 January 2003 to 7 July 2005 the Department has received correspondence about Marfan service provision from one clinician, together with six inquiries from elected representatives and one enquiry from a carer of a patient with Marfan syndrome.

Currently, patients suffering from this rare syndrome are treated by consultants working in the Regional Genetics Centre at Belfast City Hospital and other appropriate specialists, particularly those within the cardiology unit at the Royal Group of Hospitals.

Mental Health

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many consultants specialising in mental health are employed by the *(a)* Royal Group, *(b)* Mater hospital and *(c)* United Hospitals Trust at Whiteabbey and Antrim. [9481]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is provided in the table.

Number of consultants specialising in mental health in each of the given health and social services trusts

	Headcount	*Whole-time equivalent*
Royal Group of Hospitals	0	0
Mater Infirmorum	9	7.88
United (Whiteabbey hospital)	0	0
United (Antrim hospital)	0	0

Source:
NI HSS Trusts.

United Hospitals Group HSS Trust does not directly employ any consultant psychiatrists. However, mental health services are provided at Whiteabbey hospital and are staffed by one consultant psychiatrist employed by Homefirst HSS Trust.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many consultants specialising in child and adolescent mental health are employed by the North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust. [9484]

Mr. Woodward: The number of consultants specialising in child and adolescent mental health employed by the North Belfast and West Belfast HSS Trust is 1 (0.3 WTE). This consultant provides a trust wide service across North and West Belfast and is a consultant psychologist in the trust's paediatric clinic.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken to improve the safety of patients and staff on mental health wards in the Province. [10970]

Mr. Woodward: In response to concerns about the number of violent attacks on patients and staff, the Department issued guidance to health and personal social services employers. This guidance urged employers to regularly review the assessment of risk associated with different facilities/locations, to introduce a standard method of recording all incidents of verbal and physical abuse and to regularly train staff and ensure that the training is appropriately tailored for the different staff disciplines. Employers were also encouraged to press charges in situations where staff have been the subject of violent or abusive behaviour and to provide lone peripatetic workers with a mobile telephone and develop protocols to monitor the safety of the worker. The guidance also advised that the number of entrances to A and E departments should be restricted, particularly late at night and that limits should be placed on the number of persons, not themselves requiring treatment, given entry to an A and E department.

In implementing the guidance, some trusts have installed emergency panic buttons and CCTV in A and E units, and toughened transparent screens at interview hatches.

The Department has launched a publicity campaign, designed to emphasise the message that violent attacks on staff are a crime and that the perpetrators could face a prison sentence. The Department and PSNI have also developed joint protocols for reporting incidents of verbal and physical abuse.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* members of staff, *(b)* patients and *(c)* visitors have suffered (i) verbal and (ii) physical assaults at each mental health trust in the Province in each of the last 10 years. [10971]

Mr. Woodward: This information is not held centrally and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Missed Appointments

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many missed hospital out-patient appointments there were in each health trust in the Province in each of the last three years. [17545]

Mr. Woodward: The total number of missed hospital out-patient appointments in each financial year 2002–03 to 2004–05 is provided in the following table. Please note that figures for 2004–05 are provisional. These figures represent the number of out-patient appointments where a patient did not attend and failed to give advance warning to the hospital.

Total number of missed hospital out-patient appointments

Trust	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*[1]
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	15,397	16,233	16,788
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	2,674	2,597	2,519
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	23,223	23,461	22,283
Causeway HSS Trust	5,831	6,045	5,080
Craigavon and Banbridge Community HSS Trust	1,940	1,794	2,010
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust	15,103	14,623	13,416
Down Lisburn HSS Trust	7,440	7,136	6,558
Foyle Community HSS Trust	1,311	1,986	1,884
Green Park Healthcare HSS Trust	7,377	8,159	8,169
Homefirst Community HSS Trust	3,701	3,893	4,251
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	11,694	12,023	12,302
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	9,349	9,798	8,934
North and West Belfast HSS Trust	293	523	419
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	53,707	53,602	51,100
South and East Belfast HSS Trust	3,816	3,609	2,890
Sperrin Lakeland HSS Trust	6,884	6,335	6,043
Ulster Community and Hospitals HSS Trust	20,743	20,253	19,951
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust	13,487	12,739	13,141
Northern Ireland total	203,970	204,809	197,738

[1] Provisional

NHS (Overseas Workers)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate the training costs that are saved as the result of having staff from overseas working within the NHS. [11793]

Mr. Woodward: Trained staff employed from overseas does not have the effect of creating savings in training costs. Ethical recruitment of overseas staff has been carried out in recent years to partly address serious work force shortages when the level of departmental funding for training would not have supplied sufficient numbers of trained staff for the health service. Departmental spending on training has since increased considerably with the annual intake of student nurses being increased from 480 in 1999 to the current level of 750; an additional 63 medical students will enter Queen's University in September 2005, bringing the annual intake to 250.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many nurses from abroad are employed at *(a)* the Mater hospital and *(b)* the Royal Group of hospitals. [9485]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is provided in the following table.

Number of nurses from abroad employed by Mater Infirmorum hospital HSS Trust and Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust as at 1 July 2005

Trust	Headcount
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	52
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	216

Source:
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust and Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust

Physiotherapists

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many vacancies for physiotherapists there are at each health trust in the Province. [10968]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is provided in the following table:

Number of Vacancies for Physiotherapists at each health trust as at 31 March 2005

Trust	Headcount	Whole-time equivalent
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	4	4.00
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	1	0.50
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	5	5.00
Down Lisburn HSS Trust	9	8.50
Green Park Healthcare HSS Trust	4	3.58
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	2	1.50
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	1	1.00
North and West Belfast HSS Trust	3	2.58
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	8	7.50
South and East Belfast HSS Trust	1	1.00
Sperrin/Lakeland HSS Trust	1	1.00
Ulster Community and Hospitals Group HSS Trust	1	1.00
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust	2	2.00
Total	42	39.16

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many physiotherapists are employed by each health trust in the Province; and how many were employed five years ago. [10969]

Mr. Woodward: Information requested is provided in the following tables:

Number of Physiotherapists employed by each health trust as at 31 March 2005

Trust	Headcount	Whole-time equivalent
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	38	35.85
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	35	28.95
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	57	49.76
Causeway HSS Trust	42	33.83
Craigavon and Banbridge Community HSS Trust	0	0.00
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust	74	61.92
Down Lisburn HSS Trust	72	61.63
Foyle Community HSS Trust	3	2.92
Green Park Healthcare HSS Trust	72	61.84
Homefirst Community HSS Trust	0	0.00
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	21	19.17
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	40	32.01
North and West Belfast HSS Trust	41	27.89
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	78	69.24
South and East Belfast HSS Trust	42	31.77
Sperrin/Lakeland HSS Trust	35	30.02
Ulster Community & Hospitals Group HSS Trust	86	68.94
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust	98	81.53
Total	834	697.27

Number of Physiotherapists employed by each health trust as at 31 March 2000

Trust	Headcount	Whole-time equivalent
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	35	31.14
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	28	24.69
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	46	40.68
Causeway HSS Trust	29	21.90
Craigavon and Banbridge Community HSS Trust	0	0.00
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust	51	41.27
Down Lisburn HSS Trust	49	40.30
Foyle Community HSS Trust	1	1.00
Green Park Healthcare HSS Trust	60	52.83
Homefirst Community HSS Trust	0	0.00
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	16	14.58
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	23	19.44
North and West Belfast HSS Trust	31	18.01
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	73	62.76
South and East Belfast HSS Trust	36	24.78
Sperrin/Lakeland HSS Trust	22	19.05
Ulster Community and Hospitals Group HSS Trust	73	54.07
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust	71	60.99
Total	644	527.49

Racially Motivated Crime

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* maximum and *(b)* minimum sentence is which has been handed down to a person charged with racially motivated crime in Northern Ireland. [18058]

Mr. Hanson: Statistics relating to sentencing of racially motivated crime are presently not available. I anticipate, however, that this information will become available towards the end of next year with the further development of the new Causeway information system.

Rail Workers (Injuries)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many rail workers have been injured while working on the rail lines in Northern Ireland in each year since 1998. [19581]

Mr. Woodward: Translink have advised that the total number of rail workers injured while working on the rail lines in Northern Ireland in each year since 1998 is 29, broken down as follows:

	Minor	Major	Total
1998	0	1	1
1999	1	0	1
2000	4	3	7
2001	2	1	3
2002	9	0	9
2003	4	0	4
2004	1	2	3
2005	0	1	1
Total			29

Of these figures, 21 workers sustained minor injuries—defined as requiring first aid treatment, resulting in less than three days lost. Eight workers sustained major injuries—defined as resulting in three days or more lost time. In addition, there were two

fatalities, one resulting in death within 12 months of an accident in 1998 and the other being a contractor's employee who died as a result of an accident in 2002.

Roads (West Belfast)

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when work in respect of the road layout at the Mackey site in West Belfast began; and when it is planned to be completed. [18691]

Angela E. Smith: The contractor was appointed on 30 March 2004 and work on the road layout began shortly thereafter and was largely completed by June 2005. The completion of the overall road layout will be dependent on sales of individual units and sites within the business park and at this stage, it is not possible to provide a definite timetable.

Sex Offenders Register

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people are on the Sex Offenders Register in Northern Ireland. [18249]

Mr. Hanson: On 30 September 2005 there were 580 persons in Northern Ireland subject to the notification requirements of Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Sickness Absence

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate the costs resulting from sickness absence among health service employees in the Province in 2004–05. [10965]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not held centrally.

Velcade

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the availability of Velcade in Northern Ireland; and what plans there are to increase access for patients to Velcade. [10354]

Mr. Woodward: Velcade was licensed for use in all areas in the UK in April 2004. Clinicians are in a position to prescribe Velcade within its licensed indications and in the context of local prescribing budgets.

Additional funding of £5 million has been allocated in 2005–06 for specialist hospital drugs. It is for the health and social services boards, as commissioners of services, to prioritise how funding is used, taking into account the competing demands and pressures in their areas and the strategic objectives and priorities of the Department.

The Department will continue to seek to improve access to specialist medicines that offer the potential for significant improvement in patient care.

Violent Offenders

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the timetable is for legislation to require the assessment and risk management of violent offenders in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [16600]

Mr. Hanson: The first thematic inspection by the Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland recommended that the current non statutory multi agency sex offender risk assessment and management (MASRAM) arrangements should be placed on a statutory footing and that other dangerous violent but non sexual offenders should be included in those arrangements. My officials are currently engaged in detailed consultation with colleagues who operate the offender management procedures, both here and in England and Wales, about the implications of such a change, and I anticipate publishing draft legislative proposals by March 2006.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether he plans to bring forward legislation on the assessment and risk management of violent offenders in Northern Ireland. [17657]

Mr. Hanson: The first thematic inspection by the Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland recommended that the current non statutory multi agency sex offender risk assessment and management (MASRAM) arrangements should be placed on a statutory footing and that other dangerous violent but non sexual offenders should be included in those arrangements. My officials are currently engaged in detailed consultation with colleagues who operate the offender management procedures, both here and in England and Wales, about the implications of such a change, and I anticipate publishing draft legislative proposals by March 2006.

Waiting Lists

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the longest time is that anyone in the Province has waited for radiotherapy in the last 10 years. [20075]

Mr. Woodward: Information on waiting times for radiotherapy treatment is not collected centrally.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* average and *(b)* longest current waiting time is for an IVU investigation within each trust in the Province. [11081]

Mr. Woodward: This information is not collect centrally, and is not readily available from Health and Social Services Trusts.

Written Answers to Questions

Friday 21 October 2005

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Domestic Violence

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what monitoring is undertaken of the handling by the courts of domestic violence cases. [19497]

Bridget Prentice: Responsibility for inspection of court administration and for CAFCASS passed to the new HM Inspectorate of Court Administration in April 2005.

Following a thematic review of the handling of domestic violence issues by CAFCASS and the administration of family courts, the Inspectorate published its report "Domestic Violence, Safety and Family Proceedings" on 11 October 2005.

My Department posted its "Overall Response" on the HM Courts Service website and is finalising a detailed Action Plan. The primary aim of the Action Plan is to ensure that HMCS procedures reflect safety concerns, so that the experiences and fears of domestic violence survivors are recognised. We will achieve that by, among other things:

mapping, in consultation with key stakeholders, front-line court staff and the judiciary, current provision of information and special facilities and developing a strategy to ensure that vulnerable court users are properly informed of special facilities as early as possible in their case;

reviewing health and safety policies and risk assessment procedures for all courts to ensure appropriate safety measures are taken to protect vulnerable parties as well as staff and judiciary;

reviewing staff training to include awareness-raising of domestic violence to equip staff to deal appropriately with vulnerable victims and witnesses.

A copy of the report have been placed in the Library of both Houses.

Electoral Register

Lynda Waltho: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will place a duty on electoral registration officers to have a complete register. [18481]

Ms Harman: The Electoral Administration Bill, introduced on 11 October, includes a new duty on electoral registration officers to take all necessary steps to ensure comprehensive registers. Those steps include the following specific measures:

(a) Sending the canvass form more than once to any address;

(b) Making house to house inquires on more than one occasion;

(c) Making contact by such other means as the registration officer thinks appropriate with persons who do not have an entry in a register;

(d) Inspecting any records held by any person which the registration officer is permitted to inspect; and

(e) Providing training to others carrying out the duty.

Electoral System

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what performance standards the Government will put in place on *(a)* security of and *(b)* access to the electoral system. [19596]

Ms Harman: The Electoral Administration Bill, introduced on 11 October 2005, makes provision for the Electoral Commission to set performance standards for electoral registration officers, returning officers and counting officers at a referendum. The Commission will be required to consult the Secretary of State and others when determining the standards to be set, and must lay a copy of the published standards before both Houses of Parliament.

Judicial Appointments

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* district judges and *(b)* immigration judges are (i) Asian, (ii) black and (iii) women. [18946]

Ms Harman: The number of *(a)* district judges and *(b)* immigration judges who are (i) Asian, (ii) black and (iii) women can be found in the following tables. The number of judges in post who are of mixed or unknown ethnicity has also been included for clarity. The figures for district judges (which can also be found on the DCA website) and those for the immigration judges, have been obtained from the DCA Judicial Database.

District judges currently in post

Judicial post	*Asian*	*Black*	*Mixed*	*Unknown*	*Female*	*Total number in post*
District judge (civil)	5	0	4	30	79	417
District judge (family division)	0	0	0	1	8	18
District judge (magistrates courts)	3	0	1	2	27	129
Total	8	0	5	33	114	564

Immigration judges currently in post

Judicial post	*Asian*	*Black*	*Mixed*	*Unknown*	*Female*	*Total number in post*
President of tribunal	0	0	0	0	0	1
Deputy president	0	0	0	0	1	2
Senior immigration judge	2	2	0	0	9	34
Salaried immigration judge	4	6	3	2	38	123
Designated immigration judge	1	0	1	1	5	27

Immigration judges currently in post

Judicial post	*Asian*	*Black*	*Mixed*	*Unknown*	*Female*	*Total number in post*
Fee paid immigration judge	18	12	5	10	116	388
Total	25	20	9	13	169	575

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many persons applied for the post of Chairman of the Judicial Appointments Commission. [18947]

Ms Harman: 48 people applied for the post of Chairman of the Judicial Appointments Commission. The following table gives the gender and, where known, the ethnicity of the applicants.

	Applicants
Total number of applicants	48
Percentage	
Male	58
Female	42
White	78
Asian	14
Chinese	2
Non-respondent/unknown	6

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the Department's progress in promoting judicial diversity. [18729]

Ms Harman: The Lord Chancellor launched the judicial diversity programme in March, following a public consultation. The programme focuses on three main areas: encouraging applications from and raising awareness among groups currently under-represented in the judiciary; removing barriers to appointment; and ensuring that the way the judicial office operates encourages a more diverse judiciary, for example, by increasing opportunities for flexible working.

On 13 July the Lord Chancellor announced his intention to legislate to widen eligibility to apply for judicial appointment and progress on other steps he was taking to increase diversity, 13 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 26WS. He will make a further announcement shortly.

Jury Service

Mr. Drew: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will bring forward proposals to remove the upper age bar on jury service. [19218]

Ms Harman: The Government agree with Lord Justice Auld's finding in his "Review of the Criminal Courts" that there is no compelling case for changing the present age limit of 70 for jury service.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what was the total cost of jurors' expenses in England between 2001 and 2005. [19318]

Ms Harman: Juror expenses which constituted loss of earnings allowance, travel and subsistence amounted to:

	£
2001–02	33,785,360
2002–03	40,105,495
2003–04	38,742,968
2004–05	37,046,603

Polling Station Guidance

Lynda Waltho: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will provide guidance in polling stations in languages other than English. [18480]

Ms Harman: My Department introduced the Electoral Administration Bill on 11 October. It includes a clause aimed at improving access to voting for all by providing for guidance to voters at polling stations to be made in languages other than English and Welsh, as well as graphical representations.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

British Olympic Association (Chairman)

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 14 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 605W, on the British Olympic Association Chairman, which candidate approached her; and which candidate approached the Chair of UK Sport. [20203]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 20 October 2005]*: As I stated in my answer of 14 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 605W, I was approached by a candidate for the post of British Olympic Association (BOA) chairman who asked his opinion on the nature and scope of the role. I can confirm that the identity of that candidate was Mr. David Hemery who was publicly named as one of the two candidates to stand in the election for the new chairman post of the BOA.

It would not be appropriate for me to release the name of the person who approached the Chair of UK Sport, since this person has not been publicly identified as a potential candidate for this post.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions took place between Ministers in her Department and UK Sport on the recent election to the chairmanship of the British Olympic Association. [20453]

Mr. Caborn: I can confirm that there were no specific meetings, telephone conversations or exchanges of correspondence between Ministers in the Department and UK Sport on the recent election to the chairmanship of the British Olympic Association. The topic did arise from time to time in general conversation between myself and the chair of UK Sport, as a matter of interest regarding elite sport in this country.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 14 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 605, on BOA Chairman, whether officials discussed the election of the new chairman of the British Olympic Association with *(a)* candidates for the post, *(b)* potential candidates and *(c)* voting members. [20870]

Mr. Caborn: I can confirm that my officials did not discuss the election of the new chairman of the British Olympic Association (BOA) with either candidates for the post, potential candidates or voting members of the BOA prior to that election.

Internet Access (Gravesham)

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of the proportion of households in Gravesham that have had access to the internet in each of the last 10 years. [19826]

Alun Michael: I have been asked to reply.

It is not possible to answer this question as information is not available in the form requested, but the Office for National Statistics stated, in the first quarter of 2005, 60 per cent. of households in the UK (13.1 million)[1] currently have access to the internet from home. Broadband is available to 99.3 per cent.[2] of households in the UK and has been taken up by over 8.1 million of them.[3]

The UK has made great strides in recent years and now has the most extensive broadband market in the G7 and is third for competitiveness, closing the gap on Canada in second place.[4]

Sources:

[1] Office for National Statistics—Internet Access—August 2005.

[2] Ovum—UK Broadband Status Report—Q2 2005.

[3] Ofcom Communication Market Report—August 2005—Quarterly Update.

[4] Ovum—International Broadband Market Comparisons—Q1 2005.

National Lottery

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total value of National Lottery ticket sales in the Isle of Man has been in each year since 1994. [20468]

Mr. Caborn: Ticket sales for the National Lottery in the Isle of Man did not commence until 1999. Information for the subsequent years is as follows:

	Amount (£)
1999–2000	2,092,766
2000–01	5,570,281
2001–02	5,779,743
2002–03	5,802,121
2003–04	6,056,134
2004–05	6,155,452

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what is the current balance of Lottery funds held in the National Lottery Distribution Fund on behalf of the Millennium Commission. [20469]

Mr. Caborn: The Millennium Commission's current balance held in the National Lottery Distribution Fund is £83 million, of which £67 million has been committed to existing grant programmes and for operating costs. The Millennium Commission remains in operation, and Commissioners retain discretion to offer further grants where they believe this to be appropriate.

Under the provisions of the National Lottery Bill, the Big Lottery Fund as successor body, would take on any remaining balance and funding commitments.

Olympic Games

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the public capital investment projects outside the south east which will be made as a result of the UK gaining the 2012 Olympics. [19081]

Tessa Jowell: The bid folder presented to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in November 2004 set out details of capital investment projects necessary to stage the games. This can be found at

http://www.london2012.org/en/news/publications/Candidatefile/

The majority of investment will take place in the Lower Lea Valley and surrounding areas in keeping with IOC requirements to deliver a compact and cost effective games that builds where possible on existing infrastructure.

Premier League Football (TV Rights)

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 6 May 2005, *Official Report*, columns 265–66W, on premier league football (TV rights), what recent discussions her Department *(a)* has had and *(b)* plans to have with (i) Ofcom, (ii) the Office of Fair Trading, (iii) the Department of Trade and Industry and (iv) the premier league on its role in working with the European Commission on the matter of deciding the structure of FA premier league television broadcasting rights from season 2007–08 onwards. [19418]

Mr. Caborn: Ministers and officials from both the Department for Culture Media and Sport and the Department for Trade and Industry have remained in close contact with the FA premier league, Ofcom, and OFT over the premier league broadcasting rights issue.

On all occasions the Government have made clear that this is a competition issue in which the Government have no locus to intervene.

DEFENCE

Armed Forces Personnel (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many armed forces personnel were stationed in Northern Ireland in each of the last 15 years. [19583]

Mr. Ingram: The strength by posted location for UK regular armed forces is given in Tri-Service Publication (TSP) 10, a copy of which is held in the Library of the House. TSP 10 was reinstated in February 2005,

following its suspension due to concerns over data quality which necessitated a review of the source data and computer programs used to produce it. Data prior to this are not comparable due to changes in methodology. As at 1 April 2005 there were 7,060 UK regular forces personnel posted to Northern Ireland. In addition, there were 2,010 full-time and 1,210 part-time members of the Royal Irish Regiment Home Service deployed in Northern Ireland.

Figures for the number of army personnel deployed in Northern Ireland from 1969 to 2005 are given in Table 7.4 of United Kingdom Defence Statistics 2005, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House. Comparable figures for the naval service and Royal Air Force are not held centrally.

Asian Earthquake

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what resources his Department had made available as of 11 October to India and Pakistan following the Asian earthquake. [18425]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* The Department for International Development (DFID) is the lead Government Department for the United Kingdom response to the Pakistan relief effort. The Ministry of Defence is in close consultation with DFID about possible UK military assistance and is scoping a range of potential contributions.

The MOD has offered the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) the use of a C-130 Hercules aircraft based in Afghanistan. The MOD plans to use this aircraft to fly 3,150 MOD Halal ration packs and some bottled water to Islamabad for the World Food Programme, as requested by DFID. The UK currently contributes four C-130s and a Ground Handling Team to the NATO Response Force which may be called upon to support the relief effort. One UK officer travelled to Islamabad on 13 October as part of a six-person Operational Liaison Reconnaissance Team (OLRT) scoping the options for NATO assistance.

Avian Influenza

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has made for the deployment of personnel to the prison estate in the case of an avian influenza epidemic. [19207]

Mr. Ingram: None.

Eurofighter

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost of the Eurofighter was in terms of *(a)* unit cost, *(b)* support costs and *(c)* operating costs for (i) 2003, (ii) 2004 and (iii) 2005. [17653]

Mr. Ingram: Unit Production Costs (UPC) for Typhoon are published in the Ministry of Defence Major Projects Report (MPR). The UPCs as at 31 March 2003 (MPR 2003) and 31 March 2004 (MPR 04) were £56.8 million and £49.1 million respectively. The Typhoon UPC for 2005 will be published in MPR 2005 shortly.

Support costs for the Typhoon programme cover the provision of facilities and equipment used to support and maintain the aircraft fleet. Expenditure in financial years 2003–04 and 2004–05 was £190 million and £223 million respectively.

Typhoon operating costs relate to Typhoons in service with the RAF and are increasing with the number of aircraft entering into service. Expenditure in financial years 2003–04 and 2004–05 was some £33 million and £38 million respectively.

European Airlift Transport

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the UK will join the European Airlift Transport Co-ordination Cell. [19438]

Mr. Ingram: The UK Ministry of Defence has been a member of a European Airlift organisation since its inception in 2001. It is currently called the European Airlift Centre (EAC). A number of changes are being proposed by various member nations. The UK's position is to re-inforce the effectiveness of the co-ordination function and to add in the co-ordination of other modes of transportation.

Helicopters

Mr. Scott: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many AH-64 Apache helicopters have been delivered to the British Army. [18390]

Mr. Ingram: 67 Apache AH MK1 helicopters have been delivered to the Ministry of Defence for use by the British Army.

Mr. Scott: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many crews have been trained to operate the AH-64 Apache helicopters. [18392]

Mr. Ingram: The Apache Attack Helicopter (AH) is crewed by two pilots. As at 31 October 2005 some 105 AH-trained pilots are expected to have been assigned to 9 Regt AAC, the School of Army Aviation, the Air Manoeuvres Training and Advisory Team and other organisations within the Army Air Corps.

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the level of serviceability of the helicopter fleet. [16710]

Mr. Ingram: The number of helicopters available for use to support a planned force readiness is defined as the number of aircraft that are held in the Unit Operating Fleet (UOF) on Squadrons and flights, and those that are held in storage.

Serviceability is a metric applied to helicopters allocated to the front line as part of the UOF. For the purposes of MOD reporting, a "serviceable" aircraft is defined as one that is used, is capable of being used or could be made ready for a period of two hours flying within a planned flying programme. An aggregated serviceability target level is agreed annually with the Front Line Commands. The target takes account of the expected availability of spares, maintenance personnel and the scheduled maintenance activity.

During the year, aircraft from these fleets may be deployed on operations. The aim is always to exceed the serviceability target for those aircraft, and spares and personnel are prioritised to do so. However, focus on the deployed fleet can mean that the "whole fleet" serviceability target cannot be met.

Serviceability for the operational fleet over the period June-August 2005 has been excellent: the serviceability of Merlin Mk 3 on Op Telic has been over 80 per cent.; the Lynx Mk3 onboard warships has averaged 82 per cent. and the Lynx 7/9 over 70 per cent. This is precisely what our policies are designed to achieve.

Serviceability achievements against the whole year targets for MOD fleets during the period April-June 2005–06 are shown in the following table:

Helicopter type	Unit operating fleet[1]	Percentage	
		Target serviceability	Achieved serviceability
Apache AH MK 1	40	70	[2]64
AgustaA109	3	66	71
Chinook Mk 2/2a	27	70	[3]60
Lynx Mk 7/9	75	66	[4]59
Lynx Mk 3/8	47	66	66
Merlin Mk 1	21	60	[5]45
Merlin Mk 3	15	55	57
Puma Mk 1	27	70	70
Gazelle Mk 1	73	70	77
Sea King Mk3/3a	17	78	[6]73
Sea King Mk 4/6c	29	70	[7]61
Sea King Mk 5/6/7	23	65	[8]60

[1] Number of aircraft at 1st Line, held by the Squadrons of FLC.
[2] Unit serviceability gradually increases according to length of time operating Apache. 70 per cent. serviceability target will only become applicable to the whole fleet when 4 Regt. AAC is in third year of operating the aircraft. This is due in 2008.
[3] Reduced due to focus on deployment and drawdown of aircraft from operations.
[4] Effects of Fitting of Urgent Operational Requirements (UOR's) and modifications.
[5] Increase in maintenance and replacement of tail rotor components.
[6] Sea King 3/3a Search and Rescue (SAR) helicopters have a 100 per cent. serviceability target, while standby and training aircraft have lower targets which affects the statistics. SAR tasking is always met.
[7] Trials and embodiment of UORs have affected levels.
[8] Levels constrained by the availability of repair staff.

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many helicopters are in service in the *(a)* Army, *(b)* Royal Navy and *(c)* Royal Air Force, broken down by make and model. [18220]

Mr. Ingram: The following table sets out the numbers of aircraft of each type held by the Ministry of Defence and shows the service that operates them, as at 31 July 2005. The fleet sizes quoted cover those aircraft expected to be flown. The fleet size does not include some aircraft that could return to the fleet, but are currently classified as un-repairable or redundant.

Helicopter type	Service	Fleet size
Lynx Mk 3	RN	31
Lynx Mk 7	RN	5
Lynx Mk 8	RN	34
Merlin Mk 1	RN	42
Sea King Mk 4	RN	37
Sea King Mk 5	RN	16
Sea King Mk 6	RN	5
Sea King Mk 6c	RN	5
Sea King Mk 7	RN	11
Agusta A109	Army	4
Apache AH MK 1	Army	67
Gazelle Mk 1	Army	107
Lynx Mk 7	Army	77
Lynx Mk 9	Army	22
Puma Mk 1	RAF	38
Chinook Mk 2/2a	RAF	40
Merlin Mk 3	RAF	22
Sea King Mk 3	RAF	19
Sea King Mk 3 a	RAF	6

In addition to the aircraft above, the Department contracts for commercially owned helicopters and the following table shows them broken down by service as at 31 July 2005.

Helicopter type	Service	Fleet size
Dauphin	RN	2
Bell 212	Army	7
Bell 412	RAF	15
Squirrel	RAF	37
Twin Squirrel	RAF	3

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many UK military helicopters have been involved in *(a)* relief operations and *(b)* other supporting roles in the earthquake zone in northern Pakistan and Kashmir; [20033]

(2) how many UK military helicopters were based in Afghanistan on 9 October, broken down by type. [20032]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 20 October 2005]:* There were no UK military helicopters based in Afghanistan on 9 October 2005.

DfID are the lead Department for co-ordinating the national relief effort in the earthquake zone. No UK military helicopters are currently involved. At DfID's request, however, the MOD intend to deploy three heavy lift CH-47 Chinook Helicopters, with accompanying personnel, for a four week period to support the Pakistan relief effort. A small military team travelled to Islamabad on 19 October 2005 to facilitate the deployment of these aircraft.

Iran

Mark Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what military equipment was sold to Iran in each of the past five years; and what its value was in each case. [18763]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence's Disposal Services Agency (DSA) has not sold any surplus military equipment to Iran in the last five years.

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the review of abuse investigations in Iraq

announced earlier this year by General Sir Mike Jackson has been completed; and whether a date has been set for its publication. [20523]

John Reid: Findings will be published when all related legal proceedings have concluded. No date has been set for publication.

Northern Ireland Bases

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many military bases have been closed in Northern Ireland in each year since 1998. [20448]

Mr. Ingram: The information requested, which includes military bases, joint PSNI/military bases, communications sites and observation towers is shown in the following table:

	Number
1998	8
1999	13
2000	7
2001	3
2002	3
2003	2
2004	1
2005	4

Project D154

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the original *(a)* time scale and *(b)* phasing was of Project D154 at DML; and what progress has been made to date. [18580]

Mr. Ingram: Project D154 involves the upgrade of nuclear facilities at Devonport and consists of three phases. The Phase 1 contract ran from 1993 to 1996 and allowed Devonport Management Ltd. to continue with concept and design development work for the facilities during ongoing negotiations for the Phase 2 prime contract. It was originally envisaged that the construction work would begin in 1996, with completion in 1999, but this was not achieved, primarily due to protracted contract negotiations. The Phase 2 contract was awarded in March 1997 and construction work began in 1998. The estimated date for completion of the contract was April 2004, including an end date for the construction work of January 2002.

During 2001 it became clear that the approved maximum cost for Phase 2 would be exceeded and Treasury approval for an increase in funding was granted in October 2001, allowing the Phase 2 contract to be renegotiated and re-scoped. The existing target date of January 2002, for completion of the key facilities for Vanguard Class submarines, was achieved. Work to complete the Primary Circuit Decontamination Building is expected to be completed in November 2005, in time for use during HMS Victorious's overhaul. In addition, while some of the work required to upgrade the overhaul and refuel facilities in support of attack submarines (Swiftsure and Trafalgar Classes) was completed by March 2002, elements of the work were transferred to the final phase, Phase 3, as part of the contract re-negotiations.

The first stage of Phase 3, primarily to support the overhaul and refuel of HMS Triumph, is expected to complete by the end of 2006.

RAF Northolt

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what restrictions apply to the hours at which military aircraft at RAF Northolt may *(a)* arrive and *(b)* depart; [19429]

(2) what restrictions apply to the hours at which civilian aircraft at RAF Northolt may *(a)* arrive and *(b)* depart. [19430]

Mr. Ingram: The standard airfield opening hours for both military and civilian aircraft at RAF Northolt are 0800 to 2000, seven days a week. There is some military and civilian aircraft activity outside of these hours.

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many military aircraft *(a)* arrived at and *(b)* departed from RAF Northolt in each of the last three years; [19482]

(2) how many civilian aircraft *(a)* arrived at and *(b)* departed from RAF Northolt in each of the last three years. [19481]

Mr. Ingram: We do not hold information in the format requested; the following table details the number of aircraft movements, which could be either an arrival or departure, for each of the last three years:

	Civilian	*Military*
2002	7,306	4,903
2003	7,534	5,062
2004	7,693	4,792

Civil commercial aircraft movements at RAF Northolt are limited to 7,000 per calendar year; the number of civilian movements quoted in the aforementioned table includes non-commercial civilian aircraft movements, for example those transporting visiting royalty and heads of state.

Mr. Rendall: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which categories of civilian aircraft are permitted to use RAF Northolt. [19483]

Mr. Ingram: Military and civilian aircraft are permitted to use RAF Northolt. There are no set categories.

RAF Northolt takes into account a number of factors, including the weight and configuration of the aircraft, the number of passengers and the level of fire cover required. This is done on a case-by-case basis.

RAF Waddington/Brize Norton

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) why RAF Waddington was used to transport nuclear material while RAF Brize Norton is closed; and if he will make a statement; [19345]

(2) what plans he has to reinstate RAF Brize Norton as the prime airbase from which to transport nuclear material. [19400]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has used a number of airfields in the past for the transportation of nuclear material and will use airheads in the future that meet required safety and security standards, which are the Department's paramount consideration. However, I am unable to comment on specific locations as this would be likely to prejudice national security.

Rafale Aircraft

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the new aircraft carriers will be equipped with the Rafale aircraft. [19447]

Mr. Ingram: There are no plans for this.

Skynet 5

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what will be the bandwidth for Skynet 5. [19436]

Mr. Ingram: The Skynet 5 PFI provides a total bandwidth in the region of 700 MHz. Of this, the assured MOD capacity is in the region of 400 MHz.

Sub-contracting

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what powers are available to him to intervene in the sub-contracting process of his Department's major suppliers for reasons of *(a)* technical competence and *(b)* standards of governance and probity. [17651]

Mr. Ingram: It is a condition of all contracts between the Ministry of Defence and its prime contractors that they are placed in the name of "the Authority" which is defined as the Secretary of State. Thus the procurement powers of the Secretary of State are vested in the terms and conditions of the contract. In normal circumstances, those powers are exercised through the prime contractor as appropriate, because there is no direct contractual relationship between MOD and its sub-contractors. If it were to intervene directly, MOD would undermine the contractual responsibilities of the prime contractor. It is principally the responsibility of the Department's prime contractors to select and manage the performance of their subcontractors.

Submarine IT Systems

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment has been undertaken of the *(a)* ability and *(b)* capacity of Alfred McAlpine Business Systems to deliver effective IT systems for submarines against the Department's requirements as a sub-contractor to BAE Systems. [17649]

Mr. Ingram: Alfred McAlpine Business Services do not deliver IT systems for submarines as a sub-contractor to BAE Systems submarines. These are provided under sub-contract by Computer Sciences Corporation. Any decision to find an alternative provider is primarily a matter for BAE Systems Submarines.

Surface Fleet

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 17W, on the surface fleet, if he will list the *(a)* destroyers and *(b)* frigates he expects to be in active service in (i) 2013 and (ii) 2014; and if he will make a statement. [18865]

Mr. Ingram: In 2013 we expect there to be a destroyer and frigate force consisting of four Type 22 Frigates (HMS Cornwall, Cumberland, Chatham and Campbeltown), 13 Type 23 Frigates (HMS Argyll, Lancaster, Iron Duke, Monmouth, Montrose, Westminster, Northumberland, Richmond, Somerset, Sutherland, Kent, Portland and St. Albans), and five Type 45 Destroyers (HMS Daring, Dauntless, Diamond, Dragon, and Defender). We expect the period 2012–15 to see the withdrawal from service of the last three Type 42 Destroyers, HMS Edinburgh, HMS Nottingham and HMS York, and their replacement by three further Type 45 Destroyers, the first being HMS Duncan. As explained on page 18 of "Delivering Security in a Changing World (Future Capabilities)(Cm 6269)", presented to the House in July 2004, our intention is for the Royal Navy to operate a fleet of 25 destroyers and frigates.

Type 45 Destroyer

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what military capability the Type 45 destroyer will have other than air defence. [19443]

Mr. Ingram: The Type 45 destroyer will be a versatile platform that is planned to deliver a number of capabilities in addition to air defence, including naval gunfire support and, through its embarked helicopter, anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare. It will be capable of employment in a full range of tasks including maritime force protection, interdiction and peace support operations.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Affordable Housing

Tim Farron: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many affordable housing units expected to be built or procured through the Housing Corporation Approved Development Programme in the North West Region in 2005–06, 2006–07 and 2007–08 are *(a)* mixed funded social rented housing, *(b)* temporary social rented housing, *(c)* homebuy general market purchase, *(d)* homebuy general new build, *(e)* mixed funded low cost home ownership for sale, *(f)* miscellaneous works to registered social landlord (RSL) stock, *(g)* reimprovements to rented RSL stock, *(h)* works only rehabilitation of rented RSL stock, *(i)* works only rehabilitation of RSL stock for sale, *(j)* right to acquire, *(k)* voluntary purchase grant, *(l)* do-it-yourself shared ownership, *(m)* temporary intermediate and *(n)* market rent housing; and how much will be spent on each category in each year. [19182]

Yvette Cooper: The tables show the latest estimated completions and expenditure in the North West region for 2005–06 through the Housing Corporation Approved Development Programme, for categories from *(a)* to *(n)*. Funding and completions are not

directly comparable, as funding will relate to projects running, not necessarily units completed, in any one year.

Estimated completions in North West Region for 2005–06

	Units
(a) Mixed Funded Social Rent	1,540
(b) Temporary Social Rent	0
(c) Homebuy Market Purchase	102
(d) Homebuy New Build	5
(e) Mixed Funded for Sale	558
(f) Miscellaneous works to RSL stock	542
(g) Reimprovements to RSL rented stock	114
(h) Works only rehabilitation of RSL rented stock	130
(i) Works only rehabilitation of RSL stock for sale	19
(j) Right to Acquire	85
(k) Voluntary Purchase Grant	15
(l) Do-it-yourself-shared ownership	0
(m) Temporary intermediate	0
(n) Market rent housing	0

Estimated expenditure in North West Region for 2005–06

	£ million
(a) Mixed Funded Social Rent	97.445
(b) Temporary Social Rent	0.000
(c) Homebuy Market Purchase	2.918
(d) Homebuy New Build	0.530
(e) Mixed Funded for Sale	21.799
(f) Miscellaneous works to RSL stock	3.704
(g) Reimprovements to RSL rented stock	2.369
(h) Works only rehabilitation of RSL rented stock	2.773
(i) Works only rehabilitation of RSL stock for sale	0.412
(j) Right to Acquire	0.790
(k) Voluntary Purchase Grant	0.146
(l) Do-it-yourself-shared ownership	0.000
(m) Temporary intermediate	0.000
(n) Market rent housing	0.000

Note:
Categories *(f)*, *(g)*, *(h)* and *(i)* are not counted as completions and figures are provided only for illustrative purposes.
Source:
Housing Corporation Information Management System as at 12 October 2005.

For 2006–07 and 2007–08 Regional Housing Boards have made recommendations to Ministers for the allocation of Regional Housing Pots funds. The North West Regional Housing Board has recommended that from their allocation of £500 million for the two years a total of £224 million should be allocated to the provision of affordable housing. However, the exact distribution of funding between programmes for 2006–08 will not be known until the completion of the Housing Corporation's bidding process.

In August 2005 the Housing Corporation launched the bidding round for the 2006–08 Affordable Housing Programme (AHP). This invited both registered social landlords and non-registered bodies to apply for funds to develop affordable housing based on priorities set by the Regional Housing Boards. The outcome of this bidding round will not be known until early in 2006.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many affordable housing units expected to be built or procured through the Housing Corporation Approved Development Programme in the West Midlands Region in *(a)* 2005–06, *(b)* 2006–07 and *(c)* 2007–08 are (i) mixed funded social rented housing, (ii) temporary social rented housing, (iii) homebuy general market purchase, (iv) homebuy general new build, (v) mixed funded low cost home ownership for sale, (vi) miscellaneous works to registered social landlord (RSL) stock, (vii) reimprovements to rented RSL stock, (viii) works only rehabilitation of rented RSL stock, (ix) works only rehabilitation of RSL stock for sale, (x) right to acquire, (xi) voluntary purchase grant, (xii) do-it-yourself shared ownership and (xiii) temporary intermediate and market rent housing; and how much will be spent on each category in each year. [19649]

Yvette Cooper: The following tables show the latest estimated completions and expenditure in the West Midlands region for 2005–06 through the Housing Corporation Approved Development Programme, for categories from (i) to (xiii). Funding and completions are not directly comparable, as funding will relate to projects running, not necessarily units completed, in any one year.

Estimated completions in West Midlands Region in 2005–06

		Units
i	Mixed Funded Social Rent	1,709
ii	Temporary Social Rent	0
iii	Homebuy Market Purchase	387
iv	Homebuy New Build	0
v	Mixed Funded for Sale	738
vi	Misc. works to RSL stock	59
vii	Reimprovements to RSL rented stock	7
viii	Works only rehabilitation of RSL rented stock	11
ix	Works only rehabilitation of RSL stock for Sale	0
x	Right to Acquire	34
xi	Voluntary Purchase Grant	0
xii	Do-it-yourself-shared Ownership	0
xiii	Temporary intermediate and Market rent housing	0

Estimated expenditure in West Midlands Region in 2005–06

		£ million
i	Mixed Funded Social Rent	54.514
ii	Temporary Social Rent	0.000
iii	Homebuy Market Purchase	12.006
iv	Homebuy New Build	0.000
v	Mixed Funded for Sale	9.719
vi	Misc. works to RSL stock	0.132
vii	Reimprovements to RSL rented stock	0.076
viii	Works only rehabilitation of RSL rented stock	0.158
ix	Works only rehabilitation of RSL stock for Sale	0.000
x	Right to Acquire	0.334
xi	Voluntary Purchase Grant	0.000
xii	Do-it-yourself-shared Ownership	0.000
xiii	Temporary intermediate and Market rent housing	0.000

Source:
Housing Corporation Information Management System as at 12 October 2005. Categories vi, vii, viii and ix are not usually counted as completions, and figures are provided for illustrative purposes.

For 2006–07 and 2007–08 Regional Housing Boards have made recommendations to Ministers for the allocation of Regional Housing Pots funds. The West Midlands Regional Housing Board has recommended

that from their allocation of £379 million for the two years a total of £198 million should be allocated to the provision of affordable housing. However, the exact distribution of funding between programmes for 2006–08 will not be known until the completion of the Housing Corporation's bidding process.

In August 2005 the Housing Corporation launched the bidding round for the 2006–08 Affordable Housing Programme (AHP). This invited both registered social landlords and non-registered bodies to apply for funds to develop affordable housing based on priorities set by the Regional Housing Boards. The outcome of this bidding round will not be known until early in 2006.

Beacon Council Status

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister under what circumstances beacon council status for improving urban spaces would be revoked. [18616]

Mr. Woolas: Beacon status for improving urban green spaces was awarded to seven councils in 2002. Those councils have completed their period of beacon dissemination and many others have learned from their good practice. I am aware of no circumstances under which their 2002–03 beacon status should now be reconsidered.

Council Housing

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the progress of his plans to give local authorities the ability to resume building homes. [19841]

Yvette Cooper: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Mitchell) on 13 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 118W.

Council Tax

Mr. Byers: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will extend the disabled persons council tax reduction to those who suffer from profound deafness. [20375]

Mr. Woolas: The Disabled Band Reduction (DBR) scheme is specifically designed to ensure that people with disabilities do not pay more council tax because they live in a bigger property than they would otherwise need if it were not for their disability. The scheme does not aim to provide a general discount for those with disabilities irrespective of their accommodation need and we do not have plans to extend it.

Departmental Underspending

Helen Goodman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his Department's underspend was in 2004–05 *(a)* in cash terms and *(b)* as a percentage of departmental budget. [19247]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The requested budget and expenditure information for both the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's (ODPM) main programmes Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) and local government programmes DEL is set out in the table.

	Main programmes DEL	*Local government DEL*
Final DEL (£000)	9,478,284	43,788,635
Final Outturn (£000)	8,984,837	43,573,309
(a) underspend (£000)	−493,447	−215,326
(b) underspend as a percentage of budget	−5.21	−0.5

Note:
Underspends are denoted by a minus figure.

Figures for *(a)* and *(b)* are final outturn figures as reconciled with the published ODPM Resource Accounts for 2004–05.

Emergency Vehicles (Response Times)

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment his Department has made of the impact of the WarnTone system on response times for emergency vehicles. [16854]

Jim Fitzpatrick: No impact assessment has been made.

Fire Control Centres

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether functions carried out by local fire control centres will not be carried out by the South East Regional Fire Control Centre; and if he will make a statement. [18573]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 14 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 609W.

FRS National Framework

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister for what reasons the Government's response to consultation on draft FRS National Framework 2004–05 ruled out extending insurance cover for firefighters. [17397]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Government do not provide insurance cover for firefighters. Any personal insurance is a matter of personal choice and should be seen in the context of the compensation scheme for firefighters. Firefighter pay, pension and injury arrangements reflect the nature of the job and the risks that may be incurred. The death in service benefits for firefighters are more generous than those available to any other public sector service worker.

Local Policies

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he is taking to promote *(a)* local sustainability, *(b)* the protection of local environments, *(c)* local services and facilities, *(d)* local economies and *(e)* the local democratic process; and if he will make a statement. [20292]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's aim is to build sustainable communities. As such, promoting local sustainability, the protection of local environments, local services and facilities, local economies and the local democratic process is at the heart of our agenda. All our departmental PSAs contribute in some way to these outcomes.

I would draw the hon. Member's attention to the Department's two five year plans, "Sustainable Communities: Homes for All" (Cm 6424) and "Sustainable Communities: People, Places and Prosperity" (Cm 6425). Both are available on the Department's website and in the Library of the House. Together these documents set out the Department's approach to creating sustainable communities, and describe some of the steps already taken to build them.

M42 Service Area

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the material changes were which led to the decision to re-open the public inquiry into a motorway service area between junction 3a and junction 6 of the M42, Solihull, West Midlands. [18781]

Yvette Cooper: A letter informing the relevant parties of my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister, the First Secretary of State's decision to re-open the public inquiry into the proposed motorway service area (MSA) was issued on 6 September. That letter, together with an earlier letter of 21 October 2004, sets out those matters which my right hon. Friend particularly wishes to be informed of in the light of material changes in circumstances since the original public inquiry.

Since my right hon. Friend's interim decision letter of 6 March 2001, the White Paper "The Future of Air Transport" was published on 16 December 2003; Regional Planning Guidance (now the Regional Spatial Strategy) for the West Midlands was published on 15 June 2004; the Review of the Solihull Unitary Development Plan has continued to progress; Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres was published on 21 March 2005; and revised proposals for the re-use of Walford Hall Farmhouse have been put forward.

In view of the significant amount of time which has elapsed since the original inquiry closed in June 2000, my right hon. Friend took the view that it would not be safe to proceed to decision on the appeal without a new inquiry being asked to consider these and any other material changes in circumstances since 2000.

Media Relations

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much the Department has spent on external media relations in each month of the last year. [14674]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Over the financial year 2004–05 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has spent £160,320 (£13,360 per month) on external media relations (defined as the employment of external agencies to carry out media relations for or on behalf of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister). All this spend has been through the Central Office of Information (COI) to help promote fire safety in the home.

Ministerial Travel

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many air miles were accrued through departmental ministerial travel in his Department in 2004–05, broken down by Minister; how many were *(a)* foregone and *(b)* donated to charity, broken down by charity; and whether air miles accrued by officials were required to be (i) foregone and (ii) given to charity. [17321]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information requested is not readily available and could not be provided without incurring disproportionate cost.

Ministerial travel is conducted in accordance with the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers. Guidance for Ministers on the use of Air Miles is set out in the Ministerial Code. The guidance makes clear that Air Miles should be used only for official purposes or else foregone. However, if it is impracticable to use the benefits for Government travel, there is no objection to Ministers donating them to charity if this is permissible under the terms of the airline's scheme and the charity is one chosen by the airline.

Similar rules are in place for officials.

Parks

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what area of *(a)* parkland and *(b)* metropolitan open space there is in each London borough. [18615]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The total area of green space and metropolitan open land in each London borough is shown in the table (these categories are not mutually exclusive). Data relating to "parkland" are not available.

Table 1: Area of green space and metropolitan open land by London borough

Hectares

London borough	*Green space as at 2001*	*Metropolitan open land*
City of London	19.0	0
Barking and Dagenham	1,267.1	137.8
Barnet	3,541.8	652.9
Bexley	2,318.0	630.6
Brent	956.2	298.8
Bromley	8,722.0	625.1
Camden	531.9	375.6
Croydon	3,218.6	273.3
Ealing	1,719.4	845.5
Enfield	3,749.5	507.5
Greenwich	1,706.3	1,117.8
Hackney	460.2	229.4
Hammersmith and Fulham	305.6	145.4
Haringey	783.4	448.1
Harrow	1,751.5	282.2
Havering	6,684.5	0
Hillingdon	5,638.9	37.2
Hounslow	2,277.8	806.0
Islington	187.9	13.3
Kensington and Chelsea	187.2	77.5
Kingston upon Thames	1,348.5	499.8
Lambeth	463.4	118.5
Lewisham	807.5	295.9
Merton	1,325.1	962.1
Newham	940.7	282.9
Redbridge	2,274.5	7.5
Richmond upon Thames	2,979.0	2,997.0
Southwark	736.7	485.6
Sutton	1,399.8	526.3
Tower Hamlets	384.9	121.4

Table 1: Area of green space and metropolitan open land by London borough

Hectares

London borough	*Green space as at 2001*	*Metropolitan open land*
Waltham Forest	1,249.6	212.5
Wandsworth	920.1	699.1
City of Westminster	485.4	447.2
All London boroughs	61,342.1	15,159.6

Notes:
1. Green space includes almost all natural land, such as the natural parts of parks, allotments, agricultural land, road verges and woodland.
2. Metropolitan open land is a designation unique to London and its function is to protect strategically important open spaces within the built environment.

Source:
Greenspace—Generalised Land Use Database (ODPM).
Metropolitan open land (GLA).

Regional Housing Boards

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the regional housing boards will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 when they are merged with the regional chambers. [19918]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is still considering a number of points of detail on how merger of Regional Housing Boards and Regional Planning Bodies is best effected, but hope to make a positive announcement shortly.

Regional Housing Boards provide advice to Ministers on the allocation of housing capital investment: final decisions rest with Ministers, as would be the case should Regional Assemblies take over their work.

Regional Assemblies are voluntary bodies and not therefore subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000. However, "Guidance on the General Principles of Designation of Voluntary Regional Assemblies", issued by my Department in October 2004 states:

> "The Assembly should conduct its proceedings as openly and transparently as possible, and should have policies and procedures in place to ensure the integrity of its decisions and activities. Although not subject to the legislation, the Assembly should be mindful of the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and should ensure that its constitution and activities are consistent with the spirit of the legislation".

Social Housing

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total amount of debt written off under his system of writing off debt for those local authorities which agree to large scale voluntary transfers of the housing stock is; and why the debt of authorities which retain the stock may not be written off in the same way. [18434]

Yvette Cooper: To date the Office has made Overhanging Debt payments amounting to £1.565 billion.

Where the net receipt a local authority receives for the sale of its housing stock in a Large Scale Voluntary Transfer is less than its housing debt, the Office will make a one-off payment to meet the outstanding debt. The one-off payment is in lieu of the subsidy that the Office would otherwise be required to pay the authority.

To repay the housing debt of local authorities which retain their housing stock would lead to local authorities borrowing more from the public sector whereas after stock transfer registered social landlords can borrow from the private sector.

Student Hostels

Jim Cousins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the consultees on the draft codes of practice for student hostels drawn up by Universities UK and the Accreditation Network; who responded to the consultation; and if he will place a copy of their replies in the Library. [20767]

Yvette Cooper: The following were formally consulted:

Accreditation Network UK (ANUK)
Asset Skills
Association for Student Residential Accommodation (ASRA)
Association of London Government (ALG)
Association of Managers of Student Services (AMOSSHE)
Association of Residential Letting Agents (ARLA)
Association of Residential Managing Agents (ARMA)
Association of Tenancy Relations Officers (ATRO)
Association of University Chief Security Officers (AUCSO)
Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE)
Association of University Heads of Administration (AUHA)
British Property Federation (BPF)
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health Officers (CIEH)
Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH)
Citizens Advice
Conference of University Business Officers (CUBO)
HMO Network
Housing Corporation
Independent Housing Ombudsman (IHO)
Law Commission
Local Government Association (LGA)
National Union of Students (NUS)
National Federation of Residential Landlords (NFRL)
National Landlords Association (NLA)
Opal Ltd.
Prime Living Group plc
Residential Landlords Association (RLA)
Shelter
Standing Conference of Principals (SCOP)
Unipol Student Homes
Unite plc
Universities UK
University Partnerships Programme (UPP)
University Safety and Health Association (USHA)
Wales: Higher Education Wales
Wales: Society of Directors of Public Protection in Wales
Wales: NUS (Wales)
Wales: National Assembly for Wales
Welsh Local Government Association

We are now considering responses from the following:

Accommodation Services—UCE, Birmingham
Accreditation Network UK (ANUK)

Association of Managers of Student Services (AMOSSHE)
Birmingham City Council
Bournemouth NUS
Bristol Council
Christ Church Canterbury Students Union
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health
Dartington College of Arts Students Union
De Montfort University NUS
Dr. S. L. Granum (individual)
Guild of Students—University of Birmingham
Higher Education Regulation Review Group—DFES
HMO Network
Islington Council
Kent NUS
King's College, London
Kingston University NUS
Leeds City Council
Leeds NUS
Liberty Living
Liverpool University Guild of Students
Manchester Council
Martineau Johnson Solicitors
National Union of Students (NUS)
Reading NUS
Sheffield Hallam NUS
Sheffield NUS
UCL Union
Unipol Student Homes
Unite plc
Universities UK
University of Greenwich
University of Sussex

A copy of their replies will be placed n the Library of the House.

Vacant Homes

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many vacant homes there are in Kent; and for what average period houses were vacant in each of the last three years. [19799]

Yvette Cooper: There were 23,364 empty homes in Kent as at November 2004, the latest year for which figures are available. The data are as reported on CTB1 & CTB1S forms submitted by billing authorities to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister each year. The figure includes both long and short-term empty properties.

Details of the average period for which houses were vacant in each of the last three years are not available centrally.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adult Education

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment her Department has made of the potential impact of the Learning and Skills Council funding allocations for adult education for 2005–06 on future enrolments by over-25s in Level 3 and Level 4 courses. [10741]

Bill Rammell: The Government's Skills Strategy, reaffirmed in the White Paper published on the 22 March, sets clear priorities for public funding to support adults without a platform of skills for employability. However, we also recognise the importance of higher level skills, and the Skills Strategy White Paper set out measures to strengthen support for provision at Level 3 and above. Given that higher levels of qualifications have higher rates of return for employers and individuals, it is also important that this should be reflected in the relative contributions employers and individuals make to the costs of such training.

We are committed to trialling, in two regions, providing an additional element of subsidy alongside a contribution from the employer for Level 3 training delivered flexibly through NETP. We will invest an additional £20 million per year in 2006–07 and 2007–08 to assess the impact of that way of operating prior to taking final decisions on the routing of public funds for Level 3 training through the National Employer Training Programme.

We are currently working with the LSC and others to identify the regions for the trials and expect to make an announcement shortly.

The Learning and Skills Council is responsible for the funding allocations for 2005/06 and for planning provision which meets Government priorities and local needs. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Friend with an assessment of participation by adults in Level 3 and 4 courses funded by the LSC. A copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

We are currently working with the LSC and others to identify the regions for the trials and expect to make an announcement shortly.

The Learning and Skills Council is responsible for the funding allocations for 2005/06 and for planning provision which meets Government priorities and local needs. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to my hon. Friend with an assessment of participation by adults in Level 3 and 4 courses funded by the LSC. A copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom to Mr Gordon Marsden dated 28 July 2005:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary Questions to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills regarding participation in, and funding allocations for, adult education.

As you will know, adult participation in education and skills development can take many forms. The main LSC-funded programmes are Work Based Learning (WBL), general Further Education (FE) and Adult & Community Learning (ACL). Annex 1 attached shows how much funding has been allocated to each of our local Learning and Skills Councils for these programmes, in total, for the 2003/04 and 2004/05 years. For 2005/06, you will see that in some regions (where monetary amounts appear against the Regional Office) the details are not yet finalised. We aim to publish final information on our web site as soon as we can.

We also allocate funding for other types of adult provision:

employer-based provision through the Employer Training Pilots (ETP), soon to be rolled-out across the country as a National Employer Training Programme and the Workforce Development programme. Taken together, approximate funding levels for these programmes over the 3 years are 2003–04 £84 million, 2004–05 £140 million, 2005–06 £196 million;

learning specifically aimed at people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD). For adults, spend figures over the 3 years are approximately £50 million in 2003/04, £66 million in 04/05 and we expect around £67 million in 05/06;

programmes arranged by the University for Industry (UfI), where budgets for the 3 years are in the region of £164 million, £164 million and £141 million;

School 6th Form provision for students aged 19+ at approximately £3.6 million in 03/04 and £4.5 million in 04/05. We can't say how many pupils there will be aged 19 and over in 2005/06 just yet.

In addition, we provide support for learners through Additional Learning Support for specific student needs, around 40 per cent. of which is attributable to adults or, over the 3 years roughly £123 million, £132 million and £135 million, Learner Support Funds, also provide financial support in cases of hardship and to meet childcare costs. These total £80 million a year for adults. Adult Learning Grants are also being piloted in 19 LSC areas at an annual cost of £12 million.

We also fund information, advice and guidance services for adult learners and potential learners at £36 million, £37 million and £38 million over the 3 years in question.

I have not included in Annex 1, the current funding for these programmes, because this would distort the comparison between local LSCs, as some of this funding is routed to particular parts of the country where provision is available or where we are piloting.

Annex 2 provides the participation information requested for 2003/04 and 2004/05. Figures for 2003/04 are actuals. Those for 2004/05 are estimated outturns—the 2004/05 academic year is yet to finish and, particularly for adult education which is primarily made up of shorter courses, the pattern of delivery across the academic year changes from year to year, making accurate prediction of full-year outturn difficult. Local LSCs are currently talking with providers across the whole range of our programmes for the 2005/06 year. It is too early to say what levels of participation we will see, but the LSC expects to achieve the targets we have been set on delivering the Government's priorities. This will lead to shifts in the balance of provision across programmes and we do expect a reduction in adult numbers in 2005/06 as a result. Our current estimate is that this will be around 300,000 learners, a reduction of around 7 per cent. from the 2004/05 planned level.

Regarding your question on future enrolments by over 25s in level 3 and level 4 courses, we are not able to say at this time, what the impact will be. Whilst each of our local LSCs plan provision with their providers, we don't manage providers at that level of detail. Colleges and other adult education providers will make their own decisions on the number of learners they recruit and the level of fees they may charge to meet course costs.

I hope this is helpful.

Annex 1

LSC Name	*2003/04 Allocation*			
	FE	*WBL (19+)*	*ACL*	*Total*
Norfolk	19,157,086	2,921,592	2,351,796	24,430,474
Cambridgeshire	18,507,467	2,222,370	2,484,608	23,214,445
Suffolk	14,770,183	3,162,014	2,823,263	20,755,460
Bedfordshire and Luton	20,688,000	1,222,944	1,965,011	23,875,955
Hertfordshire	23,671,000	2,651,779	2,860,994	29,183,773
Essex	29,412,441	4,805,988	7,716,175	41,934,604
Regional Budget—East of England				0
East of England Total	126,206,177	16,986,687	20,201,847	163,394,711
Derbyshire	33,090,901	3,816,306	6,058,735	42,965,942
Nottinghamshire	47,859,536	5,074,842	3,520,897	56,455,275
Lincolnshire and Rutland	14,067,201	2,588,687	2,387,475	19,043,363
Leicestershire	36,440,740	2,038,038	6,208,593	44,687,371
Northamptonshire	15,927,000	2,665,697	2,292,541	20,885,238
Regional Budget—East Midlands				0
East Midlands Total	147,385,378	16,183,570	20,468,241	184,037,189
London North	54,021,810	2,045,319	5,186,291	61,253,420
London West	59,337,184	2,647,081	6,717,814	68,702,079
London Central	118,090,284	4,531,838	12,542,537	135,164,659
London East	112,132,881	5,055,375	16,505,406	133,693,662
London South	47,508,170	3,774,394	7,522,002	58,804,566
Regional Budget—Greater London				0
Greater London Total	391,090,329	18,054,007	48,474,050	457,618,386
Northumberland	6,520,864	1,236,167	508,585	8,265,616
Tyne and Wear	54,746,306	5,605,844	5,868,356	66,220,506
County Durham	15,902,129	1,764,859	2,239,611	19,906,599
Tees Valley	25,100,362	3,926,953	4,357,504	33,384,819
Regional Budget—North East				0
North East Total	102,269,661	12,533,823	12,974,056	127,777,540
Cumbria	12,584,017	2,018,950	1,475,744	16,078,711
Lancashire	50,267,380	5,193,195	8,687,600	64,148,175
Greater Merseyside	56,949,165	9,589,191	8,430,726	74,969,082
Greater Manchester	93,061,000	12,419,682	14,578,452	120,059,134
Cheshire and Warrington	22,952,000	4,168,432	2,413,581	29,534,013
Regional Budget—North West				0
North West Total	235,813,562	33,389,450	35,586,103	304,789,115
MKOB	31,455,029	5,409,905	5,689,540	42,554,474
Berkshire	21,310,729	3,290,962	3,577,090	28,178,781
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	50,355,843	5,122,003	3,089,659	58,567,505
Surrey	21,810,689	1,237,358	3,833,000	26,881,047
Sussex	38,065,188	4,369,946	4,635,867	47,071,001
Kent and Medway	38,956,000	4,599,361	8,433,000	52,988,361
Regional Budget—South East				0
South East Total	202,953,478	24,029,535	29,258,156	256,241,169
Devon and Cornwall	50,581,051	6,829,575	6,510,514	63,921,140
Somerset	16,731,352	1,390,494	3,617,476	21,739,322
Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole	18,123,058	2,825,082	2,009,599	22,957,739
West of England	37,539,261	2,438,197	2,161,025	42,138,483
Wiltshire and Swindon	16,308,000	1,724,101	1,112,386	19,144,487
Gloucestershire	13,829,027	1,837,789	2,746,411	18,413,227
Regional Budget—South West				0
South West Total	153,111,749	17,045,238	18,157,411	188,314,398
Shropshire	13,771,361	5,604,524	1,050,733	20,426,618
Staffordshire	35,333,725	4,865,306	3,605,596	43,804,627
Black Country	44,434,141	4,577,219	6,011,062	55,022,422
Birmingham and Solihull	82,482,484	4,835,478	6,502,855	93,820,817
Herefordshire and Worcestershire	20,458,371	2,623,052	953,026	24,034,449
Coventry and Warwickshire	32,967,245	3,158,085	5,080,851	41,206,181
Regional Budget—West Midlands				0
West Midlands Total	229,447,327	25,663,664	23,204,123	278,315,114
North Yorkshire	17,948,819	2,392,078	3,077,223	23,418,120
West Yorkshire	73,184,533	6,462,091	7,672,248	87,318,872
South Yorkshire	44,809,370	5,223,684	4,119,027	54,152,081
Humberside	32,006,135	3,077,900	4,083,006	39,167,041
Regional Budget—Yorkshire & Humberside				0

LSC Name	2003/04 Allocation FE	WBL (19+)	ACL	Total
Yorkshire & Humberside Total	167,948,857	17,155,753	18,951,504	204,056,114
National Contracting Service	0	19,748,833	0	
	1,756,226,518	200,790,560	227,275,491	2,164,543,736

LSC Name	2004/05 Allocation FE	WBL (19+)	ACL	Total
Norfolk	18,597,748	2,577,472	2,378,488	23,553,708
Cambridgeshire	18,840,300	2,642,018	2,517,813	24,000,131
Suffolk	15,625,277	3,209,003	2,834,436	21,668,716
Bedfordshire and Luton	20,674,000	1,388,856	1,941,481	24,004,337
Hertfordshire	23,785,434	2,894,867	2,946,360	29,626,661
Essex	31,919,325	3,996,808	7,671,588	43,587,721
Regional Budget—East of England				0
East of England Total	129,442,084	16,709,024	20,290,166	166,441,274
Derbyshire	31,530,715	3,922,506	6,244,794	41,698,015
Nottinghamshire	47,160,881	5,457,695	3,794,823	56,413,399
Lincolnshire and Rutland	14,690,955	2,925,478	2,464,911	20,081,344
Leicestershire	40,281,977	3,079,758	6,464,205	49,825,940
Northamptonshire	14,984,652	2,713,267	2,285,598	19,983,517
Regional Budget—East Midlands				0
East Midlands Total	148,649,180	18,098,704	21,254,331	188,002,215
London North	55,905,370	2,104,756	5,202,180	63,212,306
London West	60,906,749	2,584,523	7,146,533	70,637,805
London Central	123,049,936	4,920,764	12,551,168	140,521,868
London East	120,663,295	3,101,449	16,345,420	140,110,164
London South	52,072,024	4,035,401	7,756,336	63,863,761
Regional Budget—Greater London				0
Greater London Total	412,597,374	16,746,893	49,001,637	478,345,904
Northumberland	7,361,877	1,245,000	503,565	9,110,442
Tyne and Wear	58,478,806	3,570,000	5,586,983	67,635,789
County Durham	19,120,012	1,988,000	2,404,457	23,512,469
Tees Valley	27,185,009	3,657,000	4,471,093	35,313,102
Regional Budget—North East				0
North East Total	112,145,704	10,460,000	12,966,098	135,571,802
Cumbria	12,493,547	1,924,759	1,684,384	16,102,690
Lancashire	52,371,000	5,104,629	9,003,261	66,478,890
Greater Merseyside	57,783,962	8,402,182	9,101,803	75,287,947
Greater Manchester	95,189,660	12,157,667	14,669,938	122,017,265
Cheshire and Warrington	24,069,864	4,114,892	2,489,792	30,674,548
Regional Budget—North West				0
North West Total	241,908,033	31,704,129	36,949,178	310,561,340
MKOB	35,620,654	7,098,404	5,803,101	48,522,159
Berkshire	25,417,860	4,530,508	3,723,248	33,671,616
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	47,880,510	6,906,564	3,146,465	57,933,539
Surrey	24,647,296	2,203,198	3,867,629	30,718,123
Sussex	40,754,000	4,827,932	4,760,137	50,342,069
Kent and Medway	39,275,000	4,646,469	8,488,329	52,409,798
Regional Budget—South East				0
South East Total	213,595,320	30,213,075	29,788,909	273,597,304
Devon and Cornwall	52,665,397	7,517,714	6,624,841	66,807,952
Somerset	17,190,677	1,572,974	3,618,569	22,382,220
Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole	19,512,489	3,201,500	2,079,617	24,793,606
West of England	40,121,859	2,670,000	2,371,258	45,163,117
Wiltshire and Swindon	16,001,540	2,430,000	1,098,300	19,529,840
Gloucestershire	14,344,793	1,981,820	2,692,739	19,019,352
Regional Budget—South West				0
South West Total	159,836,755	19,374,008	18,485,324	197,696,087
Shropshire	14,410,580	1,678,277	1,014,644	17,103,501
Staffordshire	38,379,523	5,826,000	3,419,531	47,625,054
Black Country	45,526,650	5,296,439	6,101,301	56,924,390
Birmingham and Solihull	87,370,383	5,238,322	6,694,680	99,303,385

LSC Name	2004/05 Allocation FE	WBL (19+)	ACL	Total
Herefordshire and Worcestershire	22,607,078	3,571,716	1,027,009	27,205,803
Coventry and Warwickshire	36,683,124	3,600,270	5,218,631	45,502,025
Regional Budget—West Midlands				0
West Midlands Total	244,977,338	25,211,024	23,475,796	293,664,158
North Yorkshire	19,434,000	2,989,838	3,178,451	25,602,289
West Yorkshire	76,774,543	7,206,974	7,553,028	91,534,545
South Yorkshire	48,386,149	6,383,653	4,190,689	58,960,491
Humberside	33,657,087	2,802,753	4,142,383	40,602,223
Regional Budget—Yorkshire & Humberside				0
Yorkshire & Humberside Total	178,251,779	19,383,218	19,064,551	216,699,548
National Contracting Service	2,491,877	51,670,956	0	54,162,833
	1,843,895,444	239,571,031	231,275,990	2,314,742,465

LSC Name	2005/06 Allocation FE	WBL (19+)	ACL	Total
Norfolk	16,594,109	0	2,378,488	18,972,597
Cambridgeshire	16,632,800	0	2,517,813	19,150,613
Suffolk	13,670,734	0	2,834,436	16,505,170
Bedfordshire and Luton	18,748,754	0	1,941,481	20,690,235
Hertfordshire	21,403,338	0	2,946,360	24,349,698
Essex	27,696,593	0	7,671,588	35,368,181
Regional Budget—East of England		17,127,000		17,127,000
East of England Total	114,746,328	17,127,000	20,290,166	152,163,494
Derbyshire	30,175,779	3,580,000	6,244,794	40,000,573
Nottinghamshire	45,666,009	4,845,000	3,794,823	54,305,832
Lincolnshire and Rutland	11,536,418	2,290,000	2,464,911	16,291,329
Leicestershire	39,031,307	2,917,000	6,464,205	48,412,512
Northamptonshire	14,284,624	2,524,000	2,285,598	19,094,222
Regional Budget—East Midlands		0		0
East Midlands Total	140,694,137	16,156,000	21,254,331	178,104,468
London North	57,271,062	0	5,202,180	62,473,242
London West	63,099,000	0	7,146,533	70,245,533
London Central	123,183,676	0	12,551,168	135,734,844
London East	119,202,610	0	16,345,420	135,548,030
London South	52,146,317	0	7,756,336	59,902,653
Regional Budget—Greater London		17,165,000		17,165,000
Greater London Total	414,902,665	17,165,000	49,001,637	481,069,302
Northumberland	6,677,297	1,276,125	503,565	8,456,987
Tyne and Wear	54,689,000	3,659,250	5,586,983	63,935,233
County Durham	17,973,747	1,998,750	2,404,457	22,376,954
Tees Valley	26,872,556	3,748,425	4,471,093	35,092,074
Regional Budget—North East		−1,000		−1,000
North East Total	106,212,600	10,681,550	12,966,098	129,860,248
Cumbria	11,630,193	1,973,000	1,684,384	15,287,577
Lancashire	49,528,928	5,232,000	9,003,261	63,764,189
Greater Merseyside	57,190,952	8,611,000	9,101,803	74,903,755
Greater Manchester	91,005,613	12,463,000	14,669,938	118,138,551
Cheshire and Warrington	22,240,198	4,218,000	2,489,792	28,947,990
Regional Budget—North West				0
North West Total	231,595,884	32,497,000	36,949,178	301,042,062
MKOB	29,938,656	7,448,000	5,803,101	43,189,757
Berkshire	25,376,000	5,240,000	3,723,248	34,339,248
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	48,965,498	7,265,000	3,146,465	59,376,963
Surrey	22,869,714	2,844,000	3,867,629	29,581,343
Sussex	40,395,000	5,062,000	4,760,137	50,217,137
Kent and Medway	36,782,429	4,824,000	8,488,329	50,094,758
Regional Budget—South East		−1,715,000		−1,715,000
South East Total	204,327,297	30,968,000	29,788,909	265,084,206
Devon and Cornwall	49,849,761	5,066,802	6,624,841	61,541,404
Somerset	15,306,931	1,061,968	3,618,569	19,987,468
Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole	18,883,558	2,156,287	2,079,617	23,119,462
West of England	32,229,399	1,806,263	2,323,407	36,359,069

LSC Name	2005/06 Allocation FE	WBL (19+)	ACL	Total
Wiltshire and Swindon	14,852,309	1,627,607	1,098,300	17,578,216
Gloucestershire	12,864,753	1,330,301	2,692,739	16,887,793
Regional Budget—South West		6,809,772		6,809,772
South West Total	143,986,711	19,859,000	18,437,473	182,283,184
Shropshire	14,939,274		1,014,644	15,953,918
Staffordshire	36,008,000	0	3,419,531	39,427,531
Black Country	47,010,520	0	6,101,301	53,111,821
Birmingham and Solihull	90,037,855	0	6,694,680	96,732,535
Herefordshire and Worcestershire	23,102,474	0	1,227,009	24,329,483
Coventry and Warwickshire	36,616,416	0	5,218,631	41,835,047
Regional Budget—West Midlands		25,841,000		25,841,000
West Midlands Total	247,714,539	25,841,000	23,675,796	297,231,335
North Yorkshire	16,880,078	0	3,170,071	20,050,149
West Yorkshire	75,603,910	0	7,557,700	83,161,610
South Yorkshire	47,482,512	0	4,192,555	51,675,067
Humberside	31,684,376	0	4,144,225	35,828,601
Regional Budget—Yorkshire & Humberside		19,782,000		19,782,000
Yorkshire & Humberside Total	171,650,876	19,782,000	19,064,551	210,497,427
National Contracting Service	2,250,000	76,662,000	0	78,912,000
	1,778,081,037	266,738,550	231,428,139	2,276,247,726

Annex 2, Adult Participation
2003/04 actuals, 2004/05 planned

		2003/04 FE	WBL	ACL	Total
	National Employer Service	36,793	21,503	—	58,296
EE060	Norfolk	55,171	1,701	15,307	72,179
EE070	Cambridgeshire	39,864	1,338	13,248	54,450
EE080	Suffolk	27,914	1,607	17,313	46,834
EE090	Bedfordshire and Luton	49,236	813	10,785	60,834
EE100	Hertfordshire	38,314	1,665	4,217	44,196
EE110	Essex	55,658	2,039	32,855	90,552
EM010	Derbyshire	79,412	1,710	13,870	94,993
EM020	Nottinghamshire	99,087	2,555	13,918	115,560
EM030	Lincolnshire and Rutland	87,553	1,232	15,569	104,354
EM040	Leicestershire	77,012	1,361	25,029	103,402
EM050	Northamptonshire	29,437	1,450	14,861	45,748
GL120	London North	63,167	766	10,281	74,214
GL130	London West	59,295	830	26,394	86,519
GL140	London Central	151,908	1,744	40,750	194,402
GL150	London East	187,455	1,318	43,534	232,307
GL160	London South	73,273	1,802	31,637	106,712
NE170	Northumberland	9,097	588	4,178	13,863
NE180	Tyne and Wear	97,531	2,498	25,155	125,184
NE190	County Durham	40,481	932	6,693	48,106
NE200	Tees Valley	62,973	1,399	15,827	80,199
NW210	Cumbria	32,292	1,003	10,950	44,245
NW220	Lancashire	103,162	2,760	59,624	165,546
NW230	Greater Merseyside	99, 226	4,377	20,977	124,580
NW240	Greater Manchester	159,429	6,280	28,619	194,328
NW250	Cheshire and Warrington	53,207	2,364	18,445	74,016
SE260	Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire	64,206	2,734	46,500	113,439
SE270	Berkshire	36,091	1,986	19,302	57,378
SE280	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	130,446	2,874	28,610	161,930
SE290	Surrey	45,693	891	27,037	73,621
SE300	Sussex	64,372	2,104	55,660	122,136
SE310	Kent and Medway	86,652	2,148	34,284	123,083
SW320	Devon and Cornwall	118,982	4,009	45,174	168,165
SW330	Somerset	33,499	806	15,559	49,864
SW340	Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole	38,628	2,443	13,545	54,616
SW350	West of England	53,638	1,338	6,078	61,054
SW360	Wiltshire and Swindon	44,394	1,351	8,265	54,010
SW370	Gloucestershire	30,296	928	17,746	48,969
WM380	Shropshire	27,632	887	3,244	31,763
WM390	Staffordshire	74,910	2,416	22,152	99,478
WM400	Black Country	83,978	2,492	17,869	104,339
WM410	Birmingham and Solihull	124,760	1,875	15,183	141,818
WM420	Herefordshire and Worcestershire	59,254	1,638	1,000	61,892
WM430	Coventry and Warwickshire	74,708	1,534	8,400	84,642
YH440	North Yorkshire	55,918	1,395	13,696	71,010
YH450	West Yorkshire	133,304	3,739	28,610	165,652
YH460	South Yorkshire	81,921	2,409	12,000	96,330
YH470	Humberside	81,769	1,495	18,000	101,264
	TOTALS	3,413,000	111,125	977,950	4,502,075

		2004/05 FE	WBL	ACL	Total
	National Employer Service	36,793	23,204	—	59,997
EE060	Norfolk	49,908	1,726	16,000	67,634
EE070	Cambridgeshire	39,320	1,264	15,833	56,417
EE080	Suffolk	32,895	1,405	17,071	51,371
EE090	Bedfordshire and Luton	42,847	775	11,000	54,621
EE100	Hertfordshire	41,062	1,588	4,000	46,651
EE110	Essex	47,494	2,051	32,400	81,946
EM010	Derbyshire	78,954	1,702	15,425	96,081
EM020	Nottinghamshire	94,355	2,539	13,918	110,811
EM030	Lincolnshire and Rutland	37,393	1,130	13,430	51,954
EM040	Leicestershire	91,285	1,509	23,530	116,324
EM050	Northamptonshire	27,756	1,324	15,150	44,230
GL120	London North	64,012	820	10,525	75,357
GL130	London West	51,298	789	28,042	80,129
GL140	London Central	135,943	1,781	41,000	178,724
GL150	London East	190,182	1,212	50,572	241,965
GL160	London South	75,152	1,539	43,350	120,041
NE170	Northumberland	9,989	538	3,684	14,210
NE180	Tyne and Wear	111,463	2,181	20,569	134,213
NE190	County Durham	44,266	842	7,030	52,137
NE200	Tees Valley	55,964	1,330	13,251	70,545
NW210	Cumbria	31,149	951	10,950	43,050
NW220	Lancashire	99,821	2,927	59,624	162,372
NW230	Greater Merseyside	95,486	4,183	24,000	123,669
NW240	Greater Manchester	159,081	5,933	28,600	193,614
NW250	Cheshire and Warrington	45,137	2,499	17,800	65,436
SE260	Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire	63,001	2,616	34,000	99,617
SE270	Berkshire	42,158	2,024	20,000	64,183
SE280	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	109,024	3,034	28,610	140,668
SE290	Surrey	48,009	1,027	24,000	73,036
SE300	Sussex	63,081	2,268	50,690	116,039
SE310	Kent and Medway	75,989	2,248	36,150	114,387
SW320	Devon and Cornwall	114,748	3,735	52,648	171,131
SW330	Somerset	41,431	809	4,265	46,505
SW340	Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole	41,428	1,528	13,760	56,716
SW350	West of England	57,655	1,329	6,100	65,084
SW360	Wiltshire and Swindon	42,948	1,237	6,386	50,571
SW370	Gloucestershire	32,589	931	16,500	50,020
WM380	Shropshire	32,934	807	5,646	39,387
WM390	Staffordshire	77,091	2,268	29,650	109,010
WM400	Black Country	82,100	2,315	18,048	102,462
WM410	Birmingham and Solihull	135,401	2,037	15,183	152,621
WM420	Herefordshire and Worcestershire	43,732	1,598	1,000	46,330
WM430	Coventry and Warwickshire	69,612	1,538	9,400	80,550
YH440	North Yorkshire	53,765	1,422	13,696	68,882
YH450	West Yorkshire	126,541	3,600	25,822	155,963

		2004/05 FE	WBL	ACL	Total
YH460	South Yorkshire	79,676	2,098	12,000	93,774
YH470	Humberside	75,011	1,387	18,000	94,398
	TOTALS	3,296,927	109,597	978,308	4,384,832

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in adult education in Gravesham are over 60-years-old. [19814]

Bill Rammell: There were just over 4.1 million learners in further education (FE) provision funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in 2003/04 in England. Of these learners, 5,459 were based in Gravesham, of which 602 were over 60 years old.

Additionally, there were over 840,000 learners funded by the LSC enrolled on adult and community learning (ACL) courses in 2003/04 in England, of which 250,000 were over 60-years-old. ACL numbers for individual parliamentary constituencies are not currently available.

Apprenticeships

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people have *(a)* begun and *(b)* successfully completed apprenticeships related to the construction industry in each of the last five years for which records are available. [18169]

Bill Rammell: Figures for those starting and successfully completing apprenticeships in construction funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) derive from the Individual Learner Record (ILR). This was collated for the first time in 2001/02 (as an Interim ILR) and comparable figures are only available for the three years from then. Results for 2004/05 are scheduled for publication in December 2005.

(a) Table 1 shows the number of starts on apprenticeships or NVQ training done within a work-based learning programme in construction.

Table 1: Number of starts in LSC funded WBL provision in construction

	Starts		
	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Advanced apprenticeships	3,800	2,900	4,600
Apprenticeships at level 2	11,900	14,100	17,100
NVQ training	3,900	3,300	1,200
Total—any framework or NVQ	19,600	20,400	22,900

Note:
Numbers may not add to totals due to founding

(b) Table 2 shows numbers (and proportions) of learners who successfully completed LSC funded apprenticeships or NVQ training done within a work-based learning (WBL) program in construction.

Table 2: Numbers of successful completers of LSC funded WBL provision in construction

	Framework (x)		NVQ only (y)		NVQ successes (x + y)		Total leavers (number)
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
Advanced apprenticeships 2001/02	2,700	(38)	1,10015	(15)	3,800	(53)	7,200
Advanced apprenticeships 2002/03	1,600	(30)	1,200	(21)	2,800	(51)	5,400
Advanced apprenticeships 2003/04	1,400	(27)	1,700	(32)	3,100	(59)	5,200
Apprenticeships at level 2 2001/02	1,700	(24)	800	(12)	2,600	(36)	7,100
Apprenticeships at level 2 2002/03	1,400	(18)	1,200	(15)	2,600	(32)	8,100
Apprenticeships at level 2 2003/04	2,700	(25)	1,400	(13)	4,200	(38)	10,900
NVQ training 2001/02	—	—	1,800	(35)	—	—	5,100
NVQ training 2002/03	—	—	1,300	(32)	—	—	4,200
NVQ training 2003/04	—	—	600	(45)	—	—	1,400
Total—any framework or NVQ 2001–02	—	—	8,200	—	—	(42)	19,400
Total—any framework or NVQ 2002–03	—	—	6,700	—	—	(38)	17,700
Total—any framework or NVQ 2003–04	—	—	7,900	—	—	(45)	17,500

Note: Numbers and percentages may not add up to totals due to rounding

Engagements

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which hon. Members met *(a)* the Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education and *(b)* the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Skills to discuss further education in response to the invitation issued on 21 June 2005. [20595]

Bill Rammell: The hon. Members listed accepted an invitation to attend the open meetings with the Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education on 23 June 2005 and with the Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education and the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Skills on 28 June 2005. No formal record was made of attendance at the meetings.

Vera Baird MP
Brian Binley MP
Graham Brady MP
Annette Brooke MP
Sir John Butterfill MP
Ann Coffey MP
Derek Conway MP
Ann Cryer MP
Philip Davies MP
Rt Hon. John Denham MP
Tobias Ellwood MP
Tim Farron MP
Rt Hon. Frank Field MP
Barbara Follett MP

Mark Hendrick MP
Stephen Hesford MP
David Howarth MP
Susan Kramer MP
Bob Laxton MP
Shahid Malik MP
Chris Mole MP
Elliot Morley MP
Greg Mulholland MP
Chris Mullin MP
Jim Paice MP
Nick Palmer MP
Andrew Pelling MP
John Penrose MP
Rt Hon. Nick Raynsford MP
Andy Reed MP
Alison Seabeck MP
Andrew Selous MP
Barry Sheerman MP
Sarah Teather MP
Mark Todd MP
Theresa Villiers MP
Dr. Rudi Vis MP
Ben Wallace MP
Dr. Tony Wright MP

Further Education

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will take steps to enable further education colleges to retain funding for students who have withdrawn from courses; and if she will make a statement. [20817]

Bill Rammell: Further education funding recognises the benefits to learners in completing their planned studies and the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) funding methodology rewards institutions with higher retention rates. The LSC's agenda for change funding reform proposals include a simpler and less bureaucratic method of recognizing retention in calculating funding. I have no plans to ask the LSC to remove consideration of retention as a funding principle.

Geography

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) when she expects the working group headed by Lord Adonis on the teaching of geography at primary schools to report; [18111]

(2) if she will list the members of the working group headed by Lord Adonis on the teaching of geography at primary schools; [18112]

(3) what the terms of reference are of the working group headed by Lord Adonis on the teaching of geography at primary schools. [18113]

Jacqui Smith: The Geography Focus Group, formed in 2004, is looking at ways to improve the teaching and learning of geography. Its remit covers both primary and secondary geography and the transition into higher education. The letter of invitation to Group members sent by the Royal Geographical Society and Geographical Association on behalf of the previous Secretary of State set out that

> "He is very keen that the Department gets a much stronger focus on subjects and has sought the assistance of our two organisations in doing so. Clearly this has to go hand in hand with wider policies which go across the education sector, but the need is recognised to strengthen teaching and learning within each subject, and to give teachers opportunities to pursue their own subject knowledge and pedagogic development.
>
> In geography, there are some challenging questions. For example, what is the unique contribution of geography to a broad and balanced education? How can we get the balance right between a solid knowledge base and well developed enquiry skills? What should young people have acquired by the age of 14, and beyond? What factors are currently impeding our progress? How can we foster the important contribution of geography to the sustainable development and international agendas?"

The Focus Group is putting forward a set of recommendations for action for consideration at the next meeting in November 2005. Members of the Focus Group are:

1. Dr. Rita Gardner, Director, Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)
2. Dr. David Lambert, Chief Executive, Geographical Association
3. Professor Andrew Goudie, Master, St. Cross College, Oxford
4. Professor David Rhind, Vice-Chancellor, City University
5. Helen Martin, Deputy Head, Shelley Primary School, Horsham
6. David Rayner, Head of Geography, Rainham Mark Grammar School, Medway
7. Dr. Mike Firth, Head, Meridian Upper School, Royston
8. Dr. Martin Frost, Director of Geographical Analyses, National Evaluation of Sure Start
9. Vanessa Lawrence, Director General, Ordnance Survey
10. Dr. Caroline Bressey, Research Fellow at the Department of Geography, University College London.
11. Barnaby Briggs, Head of Social Performance Management Unit, Shell International
12. Alasdair Thomas, Director, Birdwing
13. Dr. Gordon Conway, Chief Scientific Adviser, Department for International Development
14. Dr. Nick Middleton, writer and presenter Channel 4 series "Going to Extremes" and "Surviving Extremes"

Music Teaching

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children have to pay to study a musical instrument at school. [15977]

Jacqui Smith: Through the National Curriculum all children have opportunities to play musical instruments, to sing, perform and compose. No child is required to pay for these opportunities.

The Department does not collect information about how many children pay to study a musical instrument outside the classroom. However, in February this year we undertook a survey about the numbers of children who are studying music instruments through Local Authority Music Services. Findings will be available at the end of November 2005.

The opportunity to study particular musical instruments is not part of the statutory curriculum but we are working towards creating this opportunity for every child at Key Stage 2. In November 2004, we announced an additional investment of £30 million for this work. Funds will come on stream during 2006–07 and 2007–08.

Playing with Sounds Programme

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how the phonics pilot scheme announced on 26 July differs from the phonics content of the National Primary Strategy; [16455]

(2) why the "Playing with sounds" programme was adopted in the phonics pilot scheme announced on 26 July; [16456]

(3) if she will list the 200 schools in the phonics pilot scheme; and how those schools were selected; [16457]

(4) what training in phonics teaching will be given to the teachers and teaching assistants in the 200 schools in the phonics pilot scheme announced on 26 July. [16458]

Jacqui Smith: "Playing with sounds" has been adopted for use in the Early Reading Development Pilots as it is the Primary National Strategy's (PNS) most up to date guidance on the teaching of phonics, incorporating various recommendations arising from the expert phonics seminar convened by the Department in 2003. The purpose of the pilots is principally to test certain aspects of the teaching of phonics such as determining an appropriately fast pace, and exploring different models of support to schools and ways of enhancing parental involvement. The pilots are not seeking to examine the evidence for different phonics teaching methodologies currently available; Jim Rose's independent review of the teaching of early reading will look at those wider questions.

The content of "Playing with sounds" builds on advice given in previous PNS publications and represents the Strategy's latest guidance to schools. The content of the phonics pilots is therefore the same as the advice given by the Strategy. Where it differs is that it explores a more rigorous and systematic application of these approaches with greater emphasis on the "Playing with sounds" resource, and more direct guidance on teaching phonics and the application of phonics across the curriculum. It also tests whether children can learn all 44 phonemes, including the long vowel sounds, by the end of the foundation stage, as part of a rich and relevant early years curriculum

In addition to the materials and support already available to all schools, practitioners from the schools and key linked settings which take part in the pilot will receive intensive support from an "Early Reading" consultant employed through the local authority who will work alongside practitioners and deliver training in the suggested accelerated approach to the teaching of phonics within an appropriate foundation stage curriculum and context. The precise consultancy model will be determined locally drawing on local capacity of leading practitioners. Participating schools and settings will receive guidance materials produced by the Primary National Strategy.

The list of schools involved in the pilots is not yet complete. I will write to the hon. Member once the information has been collated and will place a copy in the Library of the House. The 20 local authorities involved in the pilot will each decide on which schools and settings should take part, supported by colleagues from the PNS, based on several factors. These include their capacity and commitment to engage with the pilot throughout the school or setting; a need to improve children's outcomes in communication, language and literacy, while already having at least a satisfactory quality of teaching in the foundation stage; and the potential for at least two of the 10 schools/settings identified in the authority to become leading practice schools/settings which can build long-term capacity in early reading in the authority area.

Student Finance

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the grants available to those students who are unable to afford university fees. [19228]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 20 October 2005]:* From the 2006/07 academic year, no eligible full-time undergraduate student in higher education will be required to contribute towards their tuition fees while they are studying. Students entering higher education in 2006/07 will be liable for variable fees of up to £3,000; but they will also be able to take out student loans to cover those fees and only pay them off once they are in employment and earning at least £15,000 per year and so able to afford to repay. Eligible students from low income families will also be eligible for a new maintenance grant of up to £2,700, and those who are charged the maximum £3,000 fee will also be eligible for a bursary of at least £300 from their institution. Indeed, most institutions have been significantly more generous than that with bursaries of up to £3,000, and in some exceptional cases up to £5,700.

In 2005/06, full-time undergraduate students attending courses at publicly funded higher education institutions are eligible for a grant of up to £1,175 towards their fees, the actual amount to which they are entitled depending upon the level of their household income. Students who are attending courses at privately funded institutions will be eligible for a non income assessed grant of £1,100 towards the full fee charged by their institution.

For part-time undergraduate students in 2006/07 there will be an increase of 27 per cent. in the grant for fees as compared to 2005/06. This will mean that a student studying at an intensity of 75 per cent. of the equivalent full-time course who is eligible for £885 in 2005/06 could receive up to £1,125 in 2006/07. In addition, the course grant of up to £250, introduced in 2004/05, will continue to be available.

As well as improvements to statutory support in 2006/07, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) will be provided with additional discretionary funding for fee

support. This approach will allow HEIs the flexibility to decide how best to use this resource and support those students who most need extra help.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans the Department has for increasing assistance to university students, with particular reference to those studying for foundation degrees. [19229]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 20 October 2005]:* Students studying for foundation degrees are eligible for the same package of support as students on other higher education courses and they can continue to receive support if they follow up their foundation degree course with study for an honours degree.

From 2006, new full-time undergraduate students with household incomes between £17,500 and £37,425 will be eligible for a new non-repayable maintenance grant of up to £2,700. The poorest students who are entitled to the full £2,700 maintenance grant and who are being charged the maximum £3,000 fee will also be entitled to a minimum institutional bursary of £300. However, most institutions will be offering much more than this with bursaries of up to £3,000, and some will be offering as much as £5,700.

Students will also be able to apply for maintenance loans which, for 2006, are being increased at a rate well above the rate of inflation. For students living away from home in London, this increase will be as much as 19.2 per cent. when compared with 2005 rates.

From 2006, eligible students will not have to pay tuition fees while they are studying. Instead, they will be able to take out a non-means tested loan to cover their fees.

For part-time undergraduate students in 2006/07, there will be an increase of 27 per cent. in the grant for fees as compared to 2005/06. This will mean that a student studying at an intensity of 75 per cent. of the equivalent full-time course who is eligible for £885 in 2005/06 could receive up to £1,125 in 2006/07. In addition, the course grant of up to £250, introduced in 2004/05, will continue to be available.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Speaker's Committee

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission when the Speaker's Committee last reported to the House on the exercise of its functions. [21101]

Peter Viggers: The Speaker's Committee Second Report 2005, which covers its general work over the period from 1 December 2004 to the Prorogation of Parliament on 7 April 2005, was laid before the House on 21 July 2005 as House of Commons Paper No. 435. Copies have been placed in the Library and are available in the Vote Office.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Avian Influenza

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what advice she has issued to large *(a)* outdoor, *(b)* free-range and *(c)* organic farmers on avoiding avian influenza; [19145]

(2) what advice on avian influenza she plans to issue to poultry keepers; [19243]

(3) what advice on biosecurity measures her Department has issued to *(a)* duck and waterfowl and *(b)* poultry keepers on the prevention of avian influenza. [19333]

Mr. Bradshaw: Comprehensive biosecurity guidance has been available on the Defra website since 2003. It was sent most recently to a wide range of industry organisations in August. We have been working with key stakeholders to draw up fuller guidance to keepers on assessing their risks, biosecurity and worker protection which we are issuing to poultry groups. This guidance has already been published on our website.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has for compensation to owners of flocks which *(a)* contract and *(b)* are culled as a result of avian influenza. [19147]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Animal Health Act provides for compensation to be paid for the value of the birds immediately before slaughter, other than diseased poultry, slaughtered following an outbreak of avian influenza.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimates she has made of how many *(a)* chickens, *(b)* ducks, *(c)* geese, *(d)* turkeys, *(e)* pheasants, *(f)* partridges, *(g)* pet birds and *(h)* wild birds are at risk from an avian influenza epidemic. [19340]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra's agricultural statistics give the latest information for 2004 as 123,622,345 chickens, 2,892,612 ducks, 161,695 geese, 6,568,800 turkeys and 3,452,309 other birds (including pheasants, partridges, quail and ratites). Information on pet and wild birds is not recorded.

We currently assess the risk of AI entering the UK as low. However it is a developing situation and we are monitoring it closely as well as stepping up our work on surveillance, biosecurity and emergency preparedness.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on measures in place to combat avian influenza. [19636]

Mr. Bradshaw: We currently assess the risk of highly pathogenic avian influenza entering the UK as low. However it is a developing situation and we are monitoring it closely as well as stepping up our work on surveillance, biosecurity and emergency preparedness.

The Government have significantly enhanced the arrangements for surveillance of wild birds, including the investigation of die-offs and sampling at shoots and wetlands. The arrangements have been agreed as part of coordinated efforts across the European Union.

The EU has also banned all imports of birds and poultry-related products, except unprocessed feathers, from countries affected by highly pathogenic avian influenza. Her Majesty's Customs and Revenue are enhancing checks of luggage of passengers travelling from Romania and Turkey.

Defra has recently reviewed and updated its contingency plans and, following a period of public consultation, the Exotic Animal Disease Generic Contingency Plan, which includes a section dealing specifically with an outbreak of avian influenza. The plan is regularly tested and was laid before Parliament on 21 July 2005. It is also available on the Defra website. In the event of an outbreak in GB the plan would be invoked immediately.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what contingency planning has been undertaken in Somerset to protect against an outbreak of Avian Influenza; and if she will make a statement. [19783]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 20 October 2005]:* DEFRA's Exotic Animal Disease Generic Contingency Plan outlines the Department's response to an outbreak of Avian Influenza among other notifiable animal diseases. The plan was laid before Parliament on 21 July.

The Taunton office of the state veterinary service held a contingency planning exercise, together with their operational partners and stakeholders, including the local authority and the National Farmers Union, on 17 to 19 October to test emergency preparedness. This is part of the routine programme of testing by the state veterinary service across Great Britain.

Broiler Chickens

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with European Union ministers about the conditions in which broiler chickens are kept in the UK; and if she will make a statement. [17751]

Mr. Bradshaw: I welcome the European Commission's proposal for a directive on the welfare of broiler chickens and look forward to working with the Commission and other member states to make further progress during our current Presidency of the EU Council of Ministers.

The proposal seeks to balance real welfare benefits for broilers and the economic, social and environmental impacts. It takes account of the latest scientific evidence, veterinary advice, consumer concerns and industry practice. DEFRA has recently concluded a full public consultation on the proposal, which will help to inform our thinking.

Municipal Waste

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of municipal waste collection in England *(a)* went to landfill, *(b)* was incinerated, including with energy recovery, *(c)* was recycled and composted and *(d)* was dealt with by other means in 2004–05. [19768]

Mr. Bradshaw: Data for 2004–05 municipal waste disposal methods are not available.

The latest available data is for 2003–04 from the Defra Municipal Waste Management Survey. This survey shows the following disposal method percentages in England:

	Percentage
(a) Landfilled	71.9
(b) Incinerated[1]	8.9
(c) Recycled and composted	19.0
(d) Other	0.1

[1] With and without energy recovery.

Note:
Percentages may not add due to rounding.

Recycling

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the Answer of 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 148W, on recycling, what statistics the Department collects on *(a)* school and *(b)* local education authority recycling programmes. [18680]

Mr. Bradshaw: Information on recyclable waste is provided to DEFRA by local authorities. This will include waste from schools and other educational establishments where it comes under the control of the local authority. However, local authorities are not requested by DEFRA to record such recycling separately from that collected from households and other premises. Therefore the statistics requested are not held centrally.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what percentage of household refuse was recycled in *(a)* England, *(b)* the Tees Valley and *(c)* Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland in each of the last five years; [18712]

(2) what percentage of commercial refuse was recycled in *(a)* England, *(b)* the Tees Valley and *(c)* Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland in each of the last five years. [18713]

Mr. Bradshaw: Results from the 2003–04 DEFRA Municipal Waste Management Survey show that 17.7 per cent. of household waste was recycled or composted in England. Data for the Tees Valley shows that 10.8 per cent. was recycled or composted and in the local authority of Middlesborough 5.3 per cent. was recycled or composted. Information is not available for the Middlesborough South and East Cleveland parliamentary constituency.

The latest information for commercial waste is from the Environment Agency's 2002–03 National Waste Production Survey. Results show that 36.6 per cent. of commercial waste was recycled or reused in England. In the Tees Valley 27.9 per cent. of commercial waste was recycled or reused. Information is not available at parliamentary constituency, or local authority level.

Ship-breaking

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many applications for permission to undertake ship-breaking of Government-owned vessels, compliant with the current environmental legislation, have been received by her Department; and what permit is required. [18606]

Mr. Bradshaw: Ship recycling facilities are permitted for the activity of ship recycling rather than for specific vessels, although there may be licence or permit conditions that limit the size of vessels that can be recycled. The licences and permits required for ship recycling depend on the location of the facility, any work needed to adapt the facility, the wastes arising from the recycling process and the nature of any existing licences and permits.

It can generally be expected that a ship recycling facility will require planning permission, a waste management licence and permits under the Food And Environment Protection Act 1985 (FEPA). However, other permits may also be required.

The Marine Environment Consents Unit, DEFRA, has responsibility for licences and consents under FEPA and has, for example, received three applications from Able UK, for construction of the dry dock, the disposal of dredged material and for extension of a jetty. An assessment of these applications cannot be made until a revised environmental statement is submitted to support the applications.

Veterinary Surgeons

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research she has evaluated on the age range of veterinary surgeons; and what discussions she has had with the Department for Education and Skills on ensuring that there is a sufficient supply of newly trained veterinary surgeons. [18452]

Mr. Bradshaw: My Department has not made a specific study of the age range of veterinary surgeons or discussed the matter with the Department for Education and Skills. However, following the publication, in October 2003, of the EFRA Committee's report on "Vets and Veterinary Services" the Department commissioned a report, by Westley Consulting. This covered a broad range of issues affecting the veterinary profession, and in particular, large animal practice.

The Westley report concluded that there is no shortage of veterinary students but explored the reasons why some graduates do not remain in farm animal practice. The Westley report also said that the retirement of older vets over the next few years may lead to a big reduction in large animal manpower and expertise and in the willingness of many practices to carry on with it.

It is important that we understand the demographics of the veterinary profession. The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons have recently sent my Department a draft Manpower Survey, which we are currently considering. We will continue to work closely with the profession on these issues, principally through the recently formed vets and veterinary services working group.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

China

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to China regarding human rights issues. [19473]

Ian Pearson: We regularly raise human rights issues with the Chinese Government. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary discussed a Tibet-related issue with Foreign Minister Li in New York in September. The UK, as EU Presidency, will take the lead in the next round of the EU China Human Rights Dialogue which will take place in Beijing on 24 October.

Timor-Leste

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the United Nations report on the prosecution of serious violations of human rights committed in Timor-Leste in 1999. [19476]

Ian Pearson: This report was commissioned by the United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) and the final report submitted to him. It was discussed by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in August 2005.

The UNSC has requested the views of the UNSG before holding any further discussion of the report.

HEALTH

Alzheimer's

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of drugs to treat Alzheimer's disease on the NHS is per patient per day; and if she will make a statement. [17974]

Jane Kennedy: Four drugs are licensed for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease in the United Kingdom—Donepezil Hydrochloride (Aricept), Galantamine (Reminyl), Memantine Hydrochloride (Ebixa) and Rivastigamine (Exelon).

The Department does not hold information on the number of patients receiving a treatment. However, the average cost per prescription item of Alzheimer's drugs dispensed in the community in England in 2004 was £85. This includes items prescribed by general practitioners and hospital doctors providing the drug was dispensed in the community. The data exclude drugs dispensed in hospitals. Typically, a prescription item is for 28 days treatment which suggests that it costs £3 a day, or around £1,000 a year to treat one patient with these drugs.

Ambulance Staff

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps have been taken to protect ambulance staff in Essex from violence and verbal abuse while on duty. [18003]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The NHS Security Management Service (NHS SMS) has policy and operational responsibility for the management of security in the national health service including Essex, including work to tackle violence against NHS staff. In November 2003, a comprehensive range of measures were introduced by the NHS SMS to proactively and reactively tackle the problem of violence against NHS staff, including those that work in the ambulance services. Since that time, an estimated 85,000 frontline NHS staff have been trained to prevent and manage violence and the number of prosecutions identified involving those who have physically assaulted staff has risen from 51 in 2002–03 to 759 in 2004–05. The NHS SMS is currently working on a project with the Home Office specifically to look at how technology and other interventions can better protect ambulance staff.

Artwork

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money was spent on purchasing artwork in each hospital trust in each of the last 24 months. [17999]

Jane Kennedy: Data is not collected centrally on the particular purchase of artwork, but information is provided annually by national health service trusts on the amount invested in arts and art projects, including labour, material and resources received from other organisations. Information covering these returns for 2003–04 and 2004–05 has been placed in the Library.

The data provided has not been amended centrally and the accuracy of this data is the responsibility of the provider organisation. Data for 2003–04 was provided as part of a mandatory data set. The information for 2004–05 was provided by trusts on a voluntary basis as part of the initiative to reduce bureaucracy in the national health service.

Asylum Seekers (Mental Health)

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the prevalence of mental health problems among refused asylum seekers. [18986]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 18 October 2005]:* No formal assessment has been made of the prevalence of mental health problems among refused asylum seekers. However, on-going research on this issue will inform the development of a resource pack to assist service commissioners and health professionals in meeting the mental health needs of asylum seekers and refugees, in line with the Department's "Delivering Race Equality" action plan.

Blind People (Rehabilitation)

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will review the training facilities available for people working to rehabilitate blind people; and if she will make a statement. [18661]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has no plans to review the training facilities available for people working to rehabilitate blind people. Professional bodies determine the content of training courses and it is for local health and social care bodies to ensure their staff are appropriately trained.

Cancer Treatment

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether it is her Department's policy for women suffering from breast cancer to have access to a local breast care service for on-going care. [17509]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In 2002, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence updated the Department's 1996 improving outcomes in breast cancer guidance.

The guidance recommends that expert care should be available locally for all patients with breast cancer. How this is achieved, will be a matter for local decision and will vary from place to place.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received regarding waiting times for cancer treatment in East Sussex. [18725]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* A search of the Department's correspondence and Parliamentary questions database shows that, since June 2005, there have been six questions from hon. and right hon. Members and one Private Office case.

The Government are keen to ensure that all patients have equal access to national health service treatment and the "NHS Cancer Plan", published in September 2000, sets out our strategy to reduce waiting times for cancer patients.

It is the responsibility of the local NHS organisations, in conjunction with their cancer networks, to plan and develop cancer services which are of high clinical quality, timely and patient-centred. Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority has advised that NHS organisations in East Sussex are committed to delivering a cancer service fit for the 21st century and that they continue to work together to improve cancer services for patients.

Care Homes (Diet)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will take steps to ensure that free, fresh, chilled drinking water is available to all care home residents throughout the day as part of the Department's review of national minimum standards. [18940]

Mr. Byrne: The issue of availability of fresh drinking water for care home residents has been raised as part of the review and is currently being considered.

A full public consultation on the proposed changes to the national minimum standards and accompanying regulations will take place next year.

Chiropody (Bedfordshire)

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment she has made of chiropody services in Bedfordshire; and if she will make a statement. [16616]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No central assessment has been made of chiropody services in Bedfordshire. Access to chiropody is a matter for primary care trusts, which have responsibility for implementing the national standards, as identified in the national service frameworks. Chiropody is one of the multidisciplinary services that should be considered in the implementation of national standards.

Clostridium Difficile

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* terms of reference and *(b)* timetable are for the inquiry by the Healthcare Commission into the outbreak of *Clostridium difficile* at Stoke Mandeville Hospital; and if she will make a statement. [18655]

Jane Kennedy: The terms of reference for the Healthcare Commission investigation into Buckinghamshire Hospitals National Health Service Trust (Stoke Mandeville Hospital) are:

"The Healthcare Commission will investigate outbreaks of *Clostridium difficile* at Stoke Mandeville and the trust's systems and procedures for the control of infection.

The investigation will also consider the wider context of *Clostridium difficile*, including relevant statistics and learning from outbreaks elsewhere, nationally and internationally.

The investigation will include in particular an examination of:

All cases of infection with the toxigenic strains of *Clostridium difficile* bacterium which occurred at Stoke Mandeville Hospital from 1 November 2003, whether they were acquired at the hospital and factors contributing to the outbreaks,

Actions to identify the presence of infection with the bacterium and to notify the relevant agencies,

Actions taken to control and arrest the spread of the bacterium,

Management actions in relation to the above,

Roles, responsibilities and actions of the relevant NHS agencies,

The local and national context in which the trust is operating, including national guidance and policy, and

Any other matters which the Healthcare Commission considers arise out of, or are connected with, the matters above.

The Healthcare Commission will publish a report on the findings of the investigation and will make recommendations as appropriate to the trust and other relevant bodies to ensure that best practice on hospital acquired infections is shared at a local and national level."

These were published on 21 July 2005 and are available on the Healthcare Commission's website at: www.healthcarecommission.org.uk/assetRoot/04/01/87/05/04018705.pdf.

The investigation is currently under way. An interim report on *Clostridium difficile* is expected before the end of the year and the final investigation report is expected to be published by the Healthcare Commission in spring 2006.

Correspondence

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the Minister of State for NHS Delivery will reply to the letter of 18 May from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood requesting a meeting to discuss the duty of care and responsibility for failed asylum seekers. [18676]

Jane Kennedy: I have now sent a reply to the right hon. Member with sincere apologies for the delay, which was due to the changes in ministerial portfolios following the general election.

Dentistry

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average cost to the NHS of dental access centres per patient episode is. [17030]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department only holds information on its central contribution to dental access centres and does not hold full cost information, which includes any primary care trust (PCT) contribution and patient charge revenue. The Department does not have complete data from PCTs on patient throughput in dental access centres. However, based on the Department's total central contribution to the cost of dental access centres and the available data on patient throughput, the estimated average cost per patient episode in 2004–05 was a maximum of £141.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of *(a)* adults and *(b)* children in the Greater Peterborough Primary Care Partnership area had access to an NHS dentist in (i) 2002, (ii) 2003 and (iii) 2004; and if she will make a statement. [18208]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The estimated percentages of child, adult and total population in the areas covered by North and South Peterborough Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) registered with general dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS) in 2002, 2003 and 2004 are shown in the table.

Percentage

	Child		*Adult*		*All*	
PCT	*GDS*	*PDS*	*GDS*	*PDS*	*GDS*	*PDS*
March 2002						
North Peterborough	66	0	63	0	64	0
South Peterborough	56	0	33	0	39	0
England	62	1	44	0	48	0
March 2003						
North Peterborough	71	0	64	0	66	0
South Peterborough	54	0	28	0	34	0
England	62	1	44	0	48	1

Percentage

PCT	Child GDS	Child PDS	Adult GDS	Adult PDS	All GDS	All PDS
March 2004						
North Peterborough	71	0	66	0	67	0
South Peterborough	53	0	29	0	34	0
England	60	2	43	1	47	1

A dental action plan is in place. This has helped with the recruitment of six dentists from Poland, who are now working in Peterborough. There is also a dental access centre in Peterborough. PDS contracts are expected to increase dental registrations by 20 per cent. In addition, one new practice opened in May 2005 and one further new PDS practice is due to open in the next six months. There are also plans for an existing dentist to open a new branch in a deprived area of the city.

Departmental Finance

Helen Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the latest estimate is of underspend by her Department *(a)* in cash terms and *(b)* as a percentage of departmental budget for financial year 2004–05. [18309]

Mr. Byrne: The latest estimate of outturn was published in the Public Expenditure Outturn White Paper 2004–05 (Cm 6639).

Diabetes

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Government are taking to inform pregnant women with diabetes of the potential risks of their disease to their child. [18001]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The diabetes and the children, young people and maternity services national service framework set out the standards of care that women with diabetes should receive before, during and after pregnancy.

All women with diabetes of childbearing age should be offered, at least once a year, information and advice about the risks associated with pregnancy and how to go about reducing those risks. This should be integrated into all women's routine diabetes care.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much her Department spent on advertising and promoting awareness of diabetes in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [18333]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Funding is made available to national health service services to implement services locally and as a result, general awareness campaigns are more likely to be developed locally in primary care trusts and hospitals rather than centrally.

Digital Hearing Aids

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the average waiting time for a digital hearing aid assessment for non-priority patients is at *(a)* the University Hospital of North Staffordshire and *(b)* NHS hospitals; and what her Department's target is; [18544]

(2) what the University Hospital of North Staffordshire's budget is for the provision of digital hearing aids to patients for year ending 31 March in *(a)* 2006, *(b)* 2007, *(c)* 2008 and *(d)* 2009; [18545]

(3) what the cost was in the year ended 31 March 2005 of the provision of digital hearing aids by the University Hospital of North Staffordshire; [18546]

(4) how many digital hearing aids the University Hospital of North Staffordshire has planned to provide to patients for the year ending 31 March *(a)* 2006, *(b)* 2007, *(c)* 2008 and *(d)* 2009; [18547]

(5) how many digital hearing aids the University Hospital of North Staffordshire has provided to patients in the year ended 31 March 2005; [18548]

(6) how many people are on the waiting list for a digital hearing aid assessment at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire; [18549]

(7) what the current waiting time is for a digital hearing aid assessment at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire for *(a)* patients who are registered blind, *(b)* patients who are terminally ill, *(c)* patients at risk at work, *(d)* patients receiving a war pension during hearing loss, *(e)* non-priority patients requiring a new hearing aid and *(f)* new non-priority patients; [18863]

(8) what the current waiting time is after assessment for the fitting of a digital hearing aid at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire for *(a)* patients who are registered blind, *(b)* patients who are terminally ill, *(c)* patients at risk at work, *(d)* patients receiving a war pension, *(e)* non-priority patients requiring a new hearing aid and *(f)* new non-priority patients. [18864]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has invested £125 million in the modernising hearing aid services (MHAS) project since 2000. As a result, from April 2005 all 164 national health service audiology services in England should be routinely fitting digital hearing aids.

Information on waiting times and local funding for provision of digital hearing aids is not held centrally.

Doctor Training

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much it cost to train a doctor resident in the UK in the last period for which figures are available. [17714]

Mr. Byrne: In the period between entry to medical school and full registration, it is estimated that training a doctor costs between £200,000 and £250,000. Doctors generally continue training after full registration. As the duration and nature of post-registration training varies greatly and as service and training costs are closely related it is not possible to provide a meaningful estimate of the total cost of training.

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many UK-trained doctors she estimates are seeking a senior house officer posting. [17716]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the number of United Kingdom trained doctors who have not yet found a senior house officer post is not collected centrally.

A snapshot survey of postgraduate deaneries established that as at early August 2005, 136 pre-registration house officers (PRHOs) in England did not have a substantive senior house officer (SHO) or equivalent post to move to upon the expiry of their PRHO contract. This number had reduced to around 100 by early September 2005 and we expect it to have reduced further as more SHO opportunities become available.

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice is given to junior doctors without senior house officer posts on what course of action they should take to ensure that they can complete their training; and if she will make a statement. [17717]

Mr. Byrne: Junior doctors seeking senior house officer posts may obtain career advice from the clinical tutor of their local trust or from their regional postgraduate dean. Career information is available on postgraduate deanery websites. Vacant senior house officer posts are advertised every week.

Provision of accessible and robust career advice is also one of the key aims of the modernising medical careers initiative. As a result, each postgraduate deanery in England has been allocated £73,200 in 2005–06 to establish career advice support systems in each deanery. We have also published Career Management—An approach for medical schools, deaneries, royal colleges and trusts—a document that presents an approach to the delivery of career management initiatives for doctors. It is intended primarily for medical schools, postgraduate deaneries, employing trusts, royal colleges and other key stakeholders in doctors' careers.

Down's Syndrome

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children have been born with Down's syndrome in each year since 1980. [18312]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Julia Goldsworthy, dated 21 October 2005:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many children have been born with Down's syndrome in each year since 1980. (18312)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is responsible for maintaining the National Congenital Anomaly System (NCAS) notifications in England and Wales. These notifications are collected for live and stillbirths and are provided by NHS Trusts on a voluntary basis either directly to ONS on form SD56 or via local congenital anomaly registers that exchange data with ONS.

These registers cover all births in Wales, but only 42 per cent. of births in England. Their information is obtained from both the SD56 form and additional information collected locally. For areas for which NCAS relies solely on SD56 notification forms recording is likely to be less complete. In 1997 there were no registers exchanging information with NCAS. In each of the years detailed below, NCAS began receiving more complete information from the local congenital anomaly registers listed:

1998 CARIS (Wales)

1999 East Midlands and South Yorkshire Congenital Anomaly Register

2000 North Thames (West) Congenital Malformation Register

2000 Merseyside and Cheshire Congenital Anomaly Survey

2002 Wessex Clinical Genetics Service

2002 Congenital Anomaly Register for Oxfordshire, Berkshire & Buckinghamshire

2003 Northern Congenital Abnormality Survey

2003 South West Congenital Anomaly Register

As a result, numbers of notifications recorded by NCAS increased for each of these regions in the year listed above.

Figures for babies notified to NCAS that were born with Down's syndrome from 1980 to 2003 (latest available year) are given in the attached table.

Number of babies with Down syndrome notified to the National Congenital Anomaly System, England and Wales 1980–2003

	Number	*Rate*[1]
1980	481	7.3
1981	475	7.4
1982	527	8.4
1983	497	7.9
1984	505	7.9
1985	442	6.7
1986	445	6.7
1987	459	6.7
1988	428	6.1
1989	487	7.0
1990	415	5.9
1991	440	6.3
1992	394	5.7
1993	311	4.6
1994	317	4.7
1995	320	4.9
1996	359	5.5
1997	417	6.5
1998	460	7.2
1999	427	6.8
2000	416	6.8
2001	383	6.4
2002	358	6.0
2003	374	6.0

[1] per 10,000 live and stillbirths

Source:
National Congenital Anomaly System

Drug Addicts (Hemel Hempstead)

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on her Department's *(a)* facilities and *(b)* funding in 2005–06 for rehabilitation of illegal drug users in the Hemel Hempstead constituency. [16700]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The support services for drug users in Hemel Hempstead, as advised by the National Treatment Agency East of England are:

Community drug and alcohol team. Statutory service, providing tier three interventions, including prescribing.

Drug-link. Non-statutory service, providing a range of interventions, including tier two interventions, a structured day programme and a residential rehabilitation service. Drug-link also has satellite services around Hemel Hempstead.

Hertfordshire Alcohol Problems Advisory Service. Non Stat alcohol service providing advice, information and counselling.

A shared care scheme with local general practitioners.

The details of funding for rehabilitation services, is not collected by constituency, but by county, where in 2005–06:

Hertfordshire's adult pooled drug treatment budget allocation in 2005–06 is £3,787,000. The 2005–06 young people's pooled drug treatment budget allocation of £334,000, a total allocation of £4,121,000.

It is estimated that an additional £3,202,000 will be made available from other funding streams for the provision of drug treatment in Hertfordshire in 2005–06.

Source:

Of information: Hertfordshire Drug Action team Treatment Plan.

Expert Witnesses

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with the Royal College of Paediatricians about establishing an accreditation scheme for expert witnesses; and if she will make a statement. [18818]

Mr. Byrne: The former Secretary of State for Health, my right hon. Friend John Reid, met with the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) in October 2004, when I understand the subject of the supply and quality of medical expert witnesses was discussed. I expect to meet with the president of the RCPCH on 14 November to discuss a range of issues, during which this subject may arise. I am also awaiting the imminent arrival of the Chief Medical Officer's report on the supply and quality of medical expert witnesses. I anticipate his report will address the issues concerning an accreditation scheme, and suggest a way forward.

GPs/Dentistry (Kettering)

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residents in the Kettering constituency were registered with *(a)* a general practitioner and *(b)* an NHS dentist in each year since 1997. [19413]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 19 October 2005]:* The information requested is shown in the tables.

Registered general practitioner patients

	Leicestershire Northamptonshire and Rutland Strategic Health Authority	*Northamptonshire Heartlands Primary Care Trust (PCT)*
1997	1,570,551	n/a
1998	1,586,682	n/a
1999	1,549,332	n/a
2000	1,544,457	n/a
2001	1,564,462	280,117
2002	1,568,323	284,662
2003	1,589,516	285,675
2004	1,583,123	287,476

n/a—data not available.

Source:

National Health Service Health and Social Care Information Centre general and personal medical services statistics.

Number of residents in the Kettering constituency were registered with a national health service dentist in each year since 1997

	Child	*Adult*	*All*
1997	15,952	42,767	58,719
1998	15,328	40,559	55,887
1999	15,296	40,740	56,036
2000	15,749	42,695	58,444
2001	15,858	42,712	58,570
2002	16,271	44,363	60,634
2003	16,301	43,998	60,299
2004	15,819	41,755	57,574
2005	15,780	38,157	53,937

Notes:

1. The drop in registrations between September 1997 and September 1998 is mostly attributable to the reduction in re-registration period from two years to 12 months.
2. Most personal dental service (PDS) schemes that have registrations have a re-registration period in excess of 15 months, so the figures for PDS schemes are generally higher than they would have been for the same attendance pattern under general dental service (CDS).
3. Prison contracts have not been included in this analysis.
4. A dentist with a GDS or PDS contract may provide as little or as much NHS treatment as he or she chooses or agreed with the PCT.
5. The Dental Practice Board has no information concerning the amount of time dedicated to NHS work by individual dentists.
6. The areas have been defined using practice postcodes within the current boundaries.

Source:

Dental Practice Board.

Herceptin/Velcade

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether people who have already been diagnosed with breast cancer will be eligible for the test to see whether their tumours are susceptible to treatment with Herceptin. [16927]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Secretary of State for Heath recently announced that from early October 2005 the HER2 test, which identifies whether someone with breast cancer will benefit from Herceptin, will be made available to everyone newly diagnosed with early breast cancer.

For those patients who have already been diagnosed with breast cancer, it will be for the clinicians concerned to decide whether to use the HER2 test, based on factors such as the extent of the disease, previous treatment experience, the patient's fitness and what the patient wants.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether NHS trusts have the option of funding *(a)* Herceptin and *(b)* Velcade pending the appraisal by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. [15715]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 10 October 2005]:* Herceptin is not yet licensed for early breast cancer. It is a matter for local decision between the clinician and funding authorities concerned whether Herceptin for early breast cancer should be prescribed for an individual patient.

Herceptin has already been licensed and approved by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) for use in women with late stage breast cancer.

Velcade is licensed for the treatment of adults with cancer of the bone marrow, or multiple myeloma, who have received at least one prior treatment and whose disease is worsening on their last treatment.

In July, my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State announced that Velcade would be referred to NICE in advance of its next programme. In the interim, there are no national restrictions on prescribing Velcade on the national health service for patients who fit the licensed indication. It is a matter for local decision.

Funding for licensed treatments should not be withheld because guidance from NICE is unavailable. In these circumstances, we expect primary care trusts (PCTs) to take full account of available evidence when reaching funding decisions. This is confirmed in "Health Service Circular 1999/176", which asks NHS bodies to continue with local arrangements for the managed introduction of new technologies where guidance from NICE is not available at the time the treatment or technology first became available.

Hospital Infections

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of e-coli have been identified in hospitals within Greater London in each year since 2000, broken down by NHS trust. [18000]

Jane Kennedy: The Department does not hold this information. E coli is not part of the mandatory surveillance system.

Hospital Staffing

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the ratio was of trained paediatric nursing staff to patients in hospitals in the Barking, Havering and Redbridge NHS Trust in the last year for which figures are available. [18011]

Jane Kennedy: The ratio of trained paediatric nursing staff to patients is not held. However, the table shows the number of qualified nursing staff in Barking, Havering and Redbridge National Health Service Trust as at 30 September 2004 which is the latest data available.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified paediatric nursing staff at 30 September 2004

	RF4—Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust
Full-time equivalent	70
Headcount	89

Source:
Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census 2004

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what budget provisions have been made for the employment of *(a)* doctors, *(b)* nurses and *(c)* other staff at the New Oldchurch Hospital, Romford for the 2006–07 financial year. [18012]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally. It is for primary care trusts to determine how they spend their revenue allocations based on the needs of the local population.

Independent Living Funds

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress is being made in setting up pilots for independent living funds announced in the strategy unit report on transforming the life chances of disabled people. [17604]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* There are no plans to set up pilots for independent living funds. However, the strategy unit report did announce pilots for individual budgets. The first individual budget pilot will focus on older people and will begin in December this year. The remaining sites, of which there will be around 12, are in the process of being selected. They will come on stream throughout 2006 and will continue for between 18 months and two years.

The programme of pilots is being developed with input from stakeholders, including people who use services, and an academic research and evaluation team. The pilots are being comprehensively evaluated in order to ensure that they can provide us with the evidence we need to make decisions about a future roll-out.

Locum Doctors

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she plans to grant negotiating rights to the Locum Doctors Association. [18357]

Mr. Byrne: We have no plans at present to grant negotiating rights to the Locum Doctors' Association.

Male Breast Reduction

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many male breast reduction operations were carried out in the last year for which figures are available. [17344]

Jane Kennedy *[pursuant to the reply, 17 October 2005, Official Report, c. 764W]:* There were 61 finished consultant episodes (a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provide) during 2003–04 of male breast reduction operations provided by the national health service for clinical reasons. These figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year. The Department does not collect figures on male breast reduction operations carried out in the independent sector for cosmetic reasons.

Medical Training (Anatomy)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact of the changes introduced in "Tomorrow's Doctors", published by the General Medical Council in 1993, on the standards of doctors' training, with specific reference to knowledge of anatomy. [18365]

Mr. Byrne: The General Medical Council's (CMC) recommendations on undergraduate medical education contained in "Tomorrow's Doctors" the latest version of which was published in July 2002, provide a valuable framework for medical schools to use in designing detailed curricula and schemes of assessment. It clearly

sets out the standards that the GMC will use to judge the quality of undergraduate teaching and assessments at individual medical schools.

The publication of "Tomorrow's Doctors" signalled a significant change in emphasis from gaining knowledge to a learning process that includes the ability to evaluate data as well as to develop skills to interact with patients and colleagues. Medical schools have welcomed the guidance and introduced new, ground breaking curricula.

It is the responsibility of the medical schools to ensure that specialist teaching meets the standards set out in Tomorrow's Doctors in order to retain GMC recognition of their course. This includes teaching in specific areas such as anatomy.

Mental Health

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many beds for female medium security mental health patients are available, broken down by region; what the occupancy levels were in the last year for which figures are available; how many of these beds were not available in the first half of this year; and if she will make a statement. [19532]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 20 October 2005]:* Information is not available in the requested format. In 2004–05, the average daily number of available beds for adults, excluding the elderly, in secure mental illness wards was 2,696.

The average occupancy rate for this period was 91.9 per cent. Information on the average daily number of available beds in secure mental illness wards, broken down by National Health Service organisations, has been placed in the Library.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects the Mental Health Bill to be introduced. [19494]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Mental Health Bill will be introduced when the legislative timetable permits.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prescriptions for anti-depressants were given by general practitioners in *(a)* 1994 and *(b)* 2004. [18801]

Jane Kennedy: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) on 27 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1338W.

NHS Beds

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total number of beds has been in the NHS in each year since 1997–98, *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by (i) strategic health authority and (ii) NHS trust. [18071]

Mr. Byrne: The data are available on the Department's website at: www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity/.

Strategic health authorities (SHAs) were established in 2002 and data on beds by SHA were published from 2002–03.

NHS Finance

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will provide details of the incentive scheme run by the NHS Bank to encourage NHS organisations to generate surpluses in the current financial year. [18077]

Mr. Byrne: An incentive scheme has been introduced for 2005–06, with the aim of encouraging good financial management. Strategic health authorities (SHAs) that generate a surplus will be rewarded by receiving an uplift to their carry forward, which will be available for spending in the next financial year. The scheme was agreed in consultation with the 28 SHAs, and the NHS Bank has been asked to manage the scheme. Arrangements with national health service trusts or primary care trusts are for individual SHAs to manage. Any SHA taking advantage of the incentive scheme will need to demonstrate satisfactory delivery of key performance targets.

Ophthalmic Operations

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* cataract operations and *(b)* other ophthalmic operations were carried out in NHS hospitals and clinics during the last year for which figures are available. [17371]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* The number of finished consultant episodes (FCEs) that took place in national health service hospitals in England in 2003–04 is shown in the table.

Operations	*FCEs 2003–04 (Thousand)*
Cataract operations	301,664
Other ophthalmic operations	175,918

Notes:
A finished consultant episode is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one health care provider. The figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.

Overseas Visitors (Charges)

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have *(a)* been refused treatment because of residential status and *(b)* declined treatment because they were told that there would be a charge under these regulations since the change to the NHS (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations were amended. [18985]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 18 October 2005]:* Successive Governments have not required the national health service to provide statistics on the number of overseas visitors seen or treated under the provisions of the NHS (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations 1989, as amended, or on the numbers of people who have declined treatment after being informed of the charges. It is therefore not possible to provide the information requested.

Physiotherapists (Essex)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many physiotherapists were employed by the NHS in Essex in 2004–05. [15614]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information as to the number of physiotherapists employed in the national health service is not available in the format requested. However, the following table shows the number of physiotherapy staff and the number of qualified physiotherapists in the Essex strategic health authority (SHA) area as at 30 September2004 (the latest data available) by primary care trust (PCT).

NHS hospital and community health services: physiotherapy staff in the Essex SHA area by organisation as at 30 September 2004

Headcount

	Total physiotherapy staff	*Qualified physiotherapy staff*
Essex SHA	584	405
Billericay, Brentwood and Wickford PCT	22	15
Colchester PCT	19	11
Epping Forest PCT	88	58
Essex Rivers Healthcare NHS Trust	79	62
Maldon and South Chelmsford PCT	30	23
Mid Essex Hospital Services NHS Trust	47	38
North Essex Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust	5	3
South Essex Partnership NHS Trust	9	4
Southend Hospital NHS Trust	145	88
Tendring PCT	24	16
Thurrock PCT	101	78
Witham Braintree and Halstead Care Trust	15	9

Source:
Health and Social Care Information Centre non-medical workforce census 2004.

Primary Care Trusts

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice is issued by her Department on co-terminosity in drawing up boundaries for proposed primary care trusts. [17772]

Mr. Byrne: The advice is set out in "Commissioning a Patient Led NHS", which was published on 28 July. A number of criteria were provided against which strategic health authorities will submit proposals for the future configuration of their primary care trusts (PCTs) and the wording of the criterion relating to co-terminosity is:

> "Improve coordination with social services through greater congruence of PCT and local government boundaries. As a general principle we will be looking to reconfigured PCTs to have a clear relationship with local authority social services boundaries. This does not need to mean a rigid 1:1 co-terminosity—big local authorities might have more than one PCTs whereas a number of small unitary authorities might fit into one PCT."

Prisons (Contraception)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the provision of contraception in prisons. [18342]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Contraceptives are not provided in prisons. Prison doctors were advised in 1995 that they should make condoms available to individual prisoners, on application, if in their clinical judgement there is a risk of transmission of HIV infection during sexual activity. The Prison Service is planning to issue revised guidance and instructions, which aim to clarify the policy on condoms so that it can be applied more evenly across the prison estate.

Pulmonary Hypertension

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps have been taken to initiate a full-research study into *(a)* the incidence of pulmonary hypertension and *(b)* the incidence of pulmonary hypertension among different gender and age groups; [17662]

(2) how many pulmonary hypertension sufferers were admitted to hospital in England in each of the last five years for which figures are available; [17820]

(3) what the average life expectancy is from diagnosis in *(a)* England and *(b)* Wales for a pulmonary hypertension sufferer; [17856]

(4) how many pulmonary hypertension sufferers in England are receiving treatment which includes use of the drug Cialis. [18436]

Mr. Byrne: We are not aware of any research studies, current or planned, into the incidence and distribution of pulmonary hypertension.

Hospital episode statistics hospital admission data for primary pulmonary hypertension is shown in the table.

	Finished consultant episodes
2003–04	3,445
2002–03	2,867
2001–02	1,844
2000–01	1,684
1999–2000	1,648

The average life expectancy for pulmonary hypertension sufferers is not available.

The drug Cialis is prescribed for conditions other than pulmonary hypertension. Therefore, it is not possible to provide figures for the number of pulmonary hypertension sufferers receiving this drug.

Salt Consumption

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been committed to the salt consumption campaign launched by the Food Standards Agency on 10 October 2005. [18073]

Caroline Flint: The Food Standard Agency has committed £6.2 million to this second phase of its salt campaign.

Smoking

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of non-smokers who died of lung cancer in each of the past 10 years. [18005]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not collected centrally.

The 2004 Health Development Agency publication, "The Smoking Epidemic in England" estimated there were around 27,400 lung cancer deaths each year, of which 23,700 deaths were attributable to smoking. The number of deaths from lung cancer not attributable to smoking is therefore around 3,700.

A copy of "The Smoking Epidemic in England" is available in the Library.

Source:

The Smoking Epidemic in England, Health Development Agency, 2004

Table five, Deaths attributable to smoking as percentage of all deaths from that disease: England 1998–2001.

Sorafenib

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to introduce the drug Sorafenib to the UK market. [17097]

Jane Kennedy: Before introducing medicines to the United Kingdom, they must undergo a licensing procedure which involves scientific assessment of all the company's quality, safety and efficacy data. For Sorafenib, the data will be evaluated using a single European procedure than separate national procedures.

Bayer Healthcare AG has announced that they have recently submitted the clinical trial results for Sorafenib to the European Medicines Agency in London. The process of evaluating all of the data for risks and benefits in patients with advanced kidney cancer can now begin. If successful, the European Agency's scientific committee for human medicinal products will reach a positive opinion enabling the Commission to authorise the marketing of this product throughout the whole European Community.

Specialist Nurses

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the overall target is for the employment of specialist epilepsy nurses by NHS trusts; [17721]

(2) if she will make a statement on the employment of specialist epilepsy nurses within the NHS. [17724]

Mr. Byrne: Information is not collected centrally on the number of specialist epilepsy nurses employed in the national health service, and there are no targets for their employment.

Nurse specialist roles have been developed to address the unmet care needs for people with a variety of neurological conditions, including epilepsy. Specialist epilepsy nurses provide an additional clinical resource and have spearheaded the development of nurse led and fast access clinics, monitoring treatment regimes and seizure control, support and information on aspects of medication and side effects and lifestyle precautions.

Specialist epilepsy nurse posts were developed through the British Epilepsy Association, now Epilepsy Action, in association with the Wellcome Foundation. There are a number of funding mechanisms supporting their development including the voluntary sector, pharmaceutical industry and the NHS.

St. Albans and Harpenden PCT

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the recent organisational and managerial changes within the St. Albans and Harpenden Primary Care Trust; and if she will make a statement. [18282]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has made no assessment of any recent organisational changes within the St. Albans and Harpenden Primary Care Trust.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Feltham Young Offenders Institute

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of the recommendations for change made in the Butt inquiry, into the death of Zahid Mubarek have been implemented at Feltham young offenders institute. [17779]

Fiona Mactaggart: Of the 26 recommendations resulting from the Butt inquiry into the death of Zahid Mubarek, 25 have been implemented. The one recommendation not implemented is number 17, which required all current action plans to be consolidated into one action plan. This was not taken forward as each action plan had a requirement to be reported separately and it was not practical to collate these as one document.

Additionally in the last three years, HM Inspectorate of Prisons visited Feltham young offender institution in 2002 and 2005. It has recognised the progress that is continuing to be made at the establishment. Feltham also received a good standards audit report in 2004, a further indication that systems and procedures are operating effectively.

Immigrant Labour

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the change in the permanently available labour force as a result of immigration to the United Kingdom in each of the last 10 years. [18736]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked for her to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. John Bercow, dated 21 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about the change in the permanently available labour force as a result of immigration in the UK in each of the last 10 years. (18736)

Table 1 provides the available information on economic activity for foreign nationals and those who arrived in the UK within the last 12 months, for the three month period ending in May, for the years 1994—2005.

Table 2 provides the available information on international migration, where the main reason for migration is work related, for the years 1994—2003.

The estimates in tables 1 and 2 are based on sample surveys which are subject to sampling variability.

Table 1: Economically active foreign nationals aged 16 and over resident in UK

Thousand

	Economically active[1] foreign nationals	
Three months ending May each year	*Total*	*Entered UK in past year*
1994	1,017	52
1995	1,006	74

Table 1: Economically active foreign nationals aged 16 and over resident in UK

Thousand

Three months ending May each year	*Economically active[1] foreign nationals*	
	Total	*Entered UK in past year*
1996	998	76
1997	1,053	79
1998	1,147	94
1999	1,112	100
2000	1,213	124
2001	1,282	113
2002	1,375	148
2003	1,449	161
2004	1,581	150
2005	1,668	187

[1] Economically active includes those who are either in employment or unemployed.

Source:

ONS—Labour Force Survey

Table 2: Work related[1] migration to and from the UK

Thousand

	Immigrants	*Emigrants*	*Balance*
1994	57.0	68.8	-11.8
1995	56.9	83.2	-26.3
1996	72.1	94.5	-22.4
1997	62.8	88.4	-25.6
1998	83.7	76.3	7.3
1999	93.9	80.4	13.5
2000	108.4	104.8	3.6
2001	123.2	93.7	29.4
2002	107.6	108.6	-1.0

Table 2: Work related[1] migration to and from the UK

Thousand

	Immigrants	*Emigrants*	*Balance*
2003	114.4	91.2	23.2

[1] The "work related" reason for migration includes those with a definite job to go to, those on business and au pairs. Those looking for work and working holidaymakers are not included in this grouping. In addition, diplomats, military personnel, merchant seamen and flight crews are excluded from the international migration estimates.

Source[2]:

ONS—International passenger Survey

[2] Data for 1994—2003 are based mainly on data from the International Passenger Survey. It is supplemented with data on flows between the UK and the Irish Republic. Other data sources allow for the estimation of adjustments to these two components. That is, an adjustment for asylum seekers and their dependants not identified by the IPS and an adjustment for those whose intended length of stay changes so that their migrant status changes.

Racist Assaults

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of racist assaults which took place in *(a)* South Tyneside, *(b)* Northumbria and *(c)* England and Wales in each of the last 10 years. [17195]

Fiona Mactaggart: The available information relates to recorded offences of racially or religiously aggravated common assault and less serious wounding.

In the recorded crime series it is not possible to separately identify those offences which are racially or religiously aggravated. This is because at the time of recording it may not be possible for the police to determine whether the offence has a racial or religious motivation.

Table 1: Recorded offences of racially or religiously aggravated assault—1999–2000 to 2001–02

Number of offences

Offence	*Area*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*
Racially or religiously aggravated less serious wounding	South Tyneside	n/a	1	2
	Northumbria	24	30	50
	England and Wales	2,687	3,176	3,463
Racially or religiously aggravated common assault	South Tyneside	n/a	4	3
	Northumbria	20	40	72
	England and Wales	4,257	4,711	5,164

n/a = Not available.

Note:

The data in this table is prior to the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard. These figures are not directly comparable with those for later years.

Table 2: Recorded offences of racially or religiously aggravated assault—2002–03 to 2004–05

Number of offences

Offence	*Area*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Racially or religiously aggravated less serious wounding	South Tyneside	4	7	8
	Northumbria	54	107	104
	England and Wales	4,352	4,840	5,312
Racially or religiously aggravated common assault	South Tyneside	5	3	4
	Northumbria	125	71	56
	England and Wales	4,491	4,017	3,677

Note:

The data in this table takes account of the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard in April 2002. These figures are not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AIDS

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the outcome of the Global Fund to Fight Aids Replenishment Conference in September. [18717]

Mr. Thomas *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* The first replenishment of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria concluded with the UK-hosted Replenishment Conference on 5–6 September 2005. Donors pledged US$3.7 billion for 2006 and 2007. This represents more than half of the US$7.0 billion[1] that the Global Fund estimated it needed for these two years. The money pledged will enable all existing Global Fund grants to be renewed (estimated need $3.3 billion[1]) and provide a modest launch pad (estimated $0.4 billion) for new programmes.

The UK pledged £100 million to the fund for 2006 and £100 million for 2007 at the Replenishment Conference. This represents a doubling of our previous pledge for these two years. The £200 million amounted to 10 per cent. of the US$3.7 billion pledged at the Replenishment Conference. The EU (member states and the EC) is the largest contributor to the Global Fund and pledging more than US$2 billion for 2006 and 2007. The EU therefore continues to show very strong leadership in tackling AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. As President of the EU, the UK drafted an EU statement highlighting the need for the Global Fund to continue to improve its performance and to be well funded.

The Replenishment Conference also focused on improving the Global Fund performance at global and country level. Progress on implementing the recommendations from the Global Task Team on Improving AIDS Co-ordination Among Multilateral Institutions and International Donors was discussed. To make the Global Fund's money work effectively the UK also pledged at the Replenishment Conference to double our contribution to the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) from £8 million to £16 million for the financial year 2005–06.

A mid-term review of the replenishment is planned for June 2006. This will be an opportunity for donors to review further the Global Fund's performance and get new and existing donors to put in more money. The UK will continue its efforts to encourage new and existing donors, including the private sector, to support the Global Fund.

[1] *Source:*
GFATM: Chair's Report 16 September 2005.

Departmental Finance

Chris McCafferty: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what was his Department's expenditure on sexual reproductive health non-governmental organisations through the Civil Society Challenge Fund in 2004–05. [20713]

Mr. Thomas: In financial year 2004–05,we supported 21 sexual reproductive health projects with 14 different non-governmental organisations through our Civil Society Challenge Fund. The funding allocated to these projects for 2004–05 was £1.133 million.

Developing World

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what studies he has commissioned on the impact of non-agricultural market access on the sustainability of forests in developing countries. [19840]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has not commissioned studies on the impact of non-agricultural market access on the sustainability of forests in developing countries. However, the European Commission has commissioned a report on the forest sector under its work programme on "The sustainability impact assessment of proposed WTO (World Trade Organisation) negotiations". The final report of the forest sector study, dated June 2004, is available on the website of the Institute for Development Policy and Management of the University of Manchester: http://www.sia-trade.org/wto/Phase3B/Reports/ForestFR19June05.pdf.

The broad conclusions of this study are that:

Tariffs on forest products are low (average trade-weighted tariffs are less than 5 per cent.).

Further reductions will not affect consumption and production a great deal, certainly not as much as population and economic growth. Much trade is already governed by regional agreements where tariffs are close to zero.

Overall, the environmental impacts of further tariff reductions are likely to be small. However, where governance is poor the social and environmental consequences of liberalisation could be significant.

Further liberalisation of agricultural trade will have a bigger impact on forests than the liberalisation of the forest products trade. This is because of the scale of agricultural trade, the scope for significant tariff reductions and the effects of conversion of forest lands to agricultural use. The product groups that affect forests most significantly are: oil palm, soybean, beef, rubber, cocoa and coffee.

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much money the Government have pledged in each of the last five years to improve pharmaceutical provision in the developing world. [19540]

Mr. Thomas: The UK Government are committed to significantly improving the access to medicines, both branded and generic in developing countries. We need to work with others to tackle the key factors affecting access if we are to make lasting improvements.

The factors recognised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) that can improve poor peoples' access to medicines are: affordable pricing, sustainable financing, reliable health services and the rational selection and use of existing drugs. In general, these are what DFID spends money on, rather than pharmaceuticals specifically.

The Department for International Development (DFID) does not specifically fund the pharmaceutical industry. However, since 2000, DFID has spent over £650 million on the health sector in Africa. This includes supporting an Access to Medicines Initiative (ATMI) in Ghana, support to the WHO for the appointment of National Professional Officers for Essential Medicines in 11 African countries, to provide technical assistance on supply, management and rational use of medicines. In addition, the UK Government have been a key donor to the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and malaria

(GFATM) and has committed £359 million through to 2008. This will help pay for increased coverage of proven interventions for these three diseases and some associated health services support.

In September this year, the UK launched, with other donors, the International Financing Facility for Immunisation (IFFIm). This will provide $4 billion for the work of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI) over a 10-year period. GAVI supports the purchase of vaccines by developing countries and the strengthening of immunisation systems. IFFIm funding will save the lives of 5 million children and prevent a further 5 million deaths of immunised children in adulthood.

At the G8 summit in Gleneagles this year, G8 leaders made a commitment to increase aid by $50 billion per annum by 2010 and to relieve developing country debt. Such an increase in long-term predictable funding includes resources for stronger health services, improving medicines and better health.

Private Members' Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development on what occasions since 1997 Ministers from his Department have *(a)* authorised parliamentary counsel to assist in preparing amendments to private Members' Bills on behalf of other private Members and *(b)* authorise officials to instruct parliamentary counsel to prepare amendments which were subsequently passed to private Members. [16636]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has no record of any such occasions.

Rebranding

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much has been spent on rebranding in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* related agencies in each of the last five years. [18078]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has not incurred any expenditure on rebranding within the Department during the last 5 years.

Capital for Development (CDC), a public limited company wholly owned by DFID, has been rebranded in the last five years. However, information on this spending could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Community Restorative Justice

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was spent on community restorative justice programmes in Northern Ireland in each of the last four years. [20363]

Mr. Hanson: Community restorative justice programmes are operated on a voluntary basis and may receive funding from independent sources outside of Government; the Northern Ireland Office has not funded any community restorative justice programmes.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the Department planned expenditure is on community restorative justice programmes in the next financial year. [20364]

Mr. Hanson: The Northern Ireland Office has no planned expenditure on community restorative justice programmes in the next financial year.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list each community restorative justice project funded by his Department. [20365]

Mr. Hanson: The Northern Ireland Office has funded no community restorative justice projects.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many community restorative justice programmes are located in *(a)* Unionist areas and *(b)* Nationalist areas. [20366]

Mr. Hanson: Community based restorative justice projects, founded on a voluntary or charitable basis, operate in both Unionist and Nationalist communities. The Northern Ireland Office has been discussing the development of operational guidelines with Northern Ireland Alternatives, who co-ordinate projects in Unionist areas and Community Restorative Justice (Ireland) who co-ordinate projects in Nationalist areas. Details on the exact number of projects for which they are responsible, and which are fully operational at this time, are not available.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will publish the protocols for community restorative justice schemes. [20367]

Mr. Hanson: Draft guidelines for the operation of community restorative justice schemes are currently under consideration. These will be published shortly.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the protocols governing community restorative justice schemes will include a requirement for those who run schemes to co-operate with the Police Service of Northern Ireland. [20368]

Mr. Hanson: The guidelines will require all community restorative justice schemes to work with criminal justice agencies, including the police, as recommended by the Review of the Criminal Justice System in Northern Ireland.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have completed community restorative justice programmes in each of the last four years. [20369]

Mr. Hanson: Community restorative justice schemes are voluntary bodies that are not funded by Government, and consequently no official information on their volume of business is unavailable.

Community Support Officers

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to bring forward legislation to permit the recruitment of community support officers in Northern Ireland. [20370]

Mr. Woodward: The decision on whether to introduce police community support officers (PCSOs) to Northern Ireland rests with the Policing Board and the police service. Currently the Board and the police are considering the potential role of PCSOs. They have yet to come to a decision on the way forward. Consequently there are currently no plans to bring forward legislation to permit the recruitment of PCSOs.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been collected by each of the 26 Northern Ireland local government councils through health and safety fines in each of the last five years. [18056]

Angela E. Smith: Local Government Councils in Northern Ireland do not collect health and safety fines. In common with the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland, Local Government Councils bring prosecutions for breaches of legislation to the Courts and if a prosecution is successful the Courts will decide on the level of fine, if a fine is imposed. The level of fines associated with successful prosecutions taken by each of the 26 Local Government Councils in each of the last four years is set out in the following table. Only Councils that took prosecutions are listed.

£

	2000-01[1]	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Ards	—	—	—	—	1,000
Ballymena	—	—	250	500	—
Banbridge	—	—	—	200	—
Belfast	21,000	600	7,500	2,500	—
Coleraine	—	—	—	300	—
Fermanagh	—	—	400	—	—
Limavady	—	—	1,000	4,000	—
Lisburn	—	1,200	—	—	250
Newry and Mourne	—		800	1,000	—
Total	21,000	1,800	9,950	8,500	1,250

[1] No complete record of fines available for 2000–01.

PRIME MINISTER

Budgets

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Prime Minister from what budget the cost of his helicopter journey to Kettering general hospital in February was met. [20285]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Tatton (Mr. George Osborne) on 23 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 621W.

Lord Birt

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister, pursuant to the answer of 12 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 662–63W, on Lord Birt, what measures were in place at the time of Lord Birt's employment with McKinsey. [20772]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to Lord Birt's letter of appointment. Copies are available in the Libraries of the House.

Ministerial Overseas Visits

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister what factors he took into account in deciding whether the *(a)* Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and *(b)* Trade and Industry Secretaries of State should accompany him on his recent visit to (i) China and (ii) India. [20580]

The Prime Minister: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Alan Johnson) accompanied me in support of the delegation of senior European business people who attended the business conferences held alongside the EU/China and EU/India summits. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs fully contributed towards the climate change aspects of the EU/India Joint Action Plan and the EU/China Partnership on Climate Change agreed at the summits.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Correspondence

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he expects to reply to the letter of 6 June from the hon. Member for Bognor Regis and Littlehampton regarding correspondence from Eurotek Office Furniture Ltd. [16436]

Alan Johnson: I apologies for the delay in replying to the hon. Member. A reply was sent on Friday 14 October.

Departmental Vehicles

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many vehicles for which the Department is responsible are fitted with retreaded tyres. [17979]

Alan Johnson: The Department does not own any vehicles. It does lease five vehicles for essential business travel through a lease car company. None of these cars are fitted with retreaded tyres.

Export Credits Guarantee Department

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) when he expects the report following the anti-bribery and corruption consultation by the Export Credits Guarantee Department to be published; and if he will make a statement; [20420]

(2) when representations received during the consultation on the Export Credits Guarantee Department's anti-bribery and corruption procedures will be available on the Department's website. [20962]

Ian Pearson: ECGD has today published an Interim Response to the public consultation on its anti-bribery and corruption procedures. This Interim Response, together with supporting documentation, including all the representations which were made to the consultation, can be found on ECGD's website at http://www.ecgd.gov.uk/index/pi_home/pi_pc/abc_int_resp.htm

ECGD is now inviting further representations on this Interim Response from those who responded to the initial consultation. It is intended that a final Government Response should be published by the end of this year.

Spam E-mails

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures the Government have introduced since 1997 to combat spam e-mails; and if he will make a statement. [20579]

Alun Michael: The Government introduced statutory controls in the UK on unsolicited e-mails through the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003, which came into force on 11 December 2003. These regulations require that unsolicited e-mails must not be sent to an individual subscriber unless prior permission has been obtained or unless there is a previous relationship between the parties. The regulations can be enforced against an offending company or individual anywhere in the European Union.

In the UK, the Information Commissioner's Office has responsibility for the enforcement of the regulations and considers complaints about breaches. Regulating unsolicited spam e-mails is a global challenge. The UK is therefore active in international discussions and on 2 July 2004 a Memorandum of Understanding was agreed between the United Kingdom, United States and Australia. This means that for the first time enforcement authorities in these countries, the Information Commissioner's Office and the Office of Fair Trading for the UK are working together to investigate spammers.

The Government have also worked to develop initiatives with international standards bodies and organisations such as the OECD that can foster a global framework. This has involved active discussion with those providing software service future solutions.

TRANSPORT

A19

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what average daily number of traffic movements there have been between Teesside and Tyneside on the A19 in the last three years. [20350]

Dr. Ladyman: The average daily traffic flow between Teesside and Tyneside on the A19 for the last three calendar years is:

	Average daily traffic flow
2004	46,300 vehicles per day with a 14 per cent. HGV content[1].
2003	45,800 vehicles per day with a 14 per cent. HGV content[2].
2002	44,600 vehicles per day with a 14 per cent. HGV content[3].

[1] The traffic flow varies along the route from 29,200 to 70,400.
[2] The traffic flow varies along the route from 29,000 to 70,500.
[3] The traffic flow varies along the route from 28,300 to 69,600.

The average traffic flow figures for 2005 are unavailable.

A21 Upgrade

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he plans to issue draft orders for the proposed A21 upgrade between Hurst Green and Flimwell. [20431]

Dr. Ladyman: Once advice has been received on priorities from the Regional Transport Board, a decision will be made on the way forward, which will determine the programme and in turn the date for issuing draft orders.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people have applied for statutory blight compensation in relation to the proposed A21 upgrade between Hurst Green and Flimwell. [20432]

Dr. Ladyman: 12 applications have been received for the acquisition of properties under the statutory blight provisions.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received on *(a)* noise pollution, *(b)* speed restrictions and *(c)* road dualing in relation to the proposed A21 upgrade between Hurst Green and Flimwell. [20433]

Dr. Ladyman: No specific representation has been received regarding noise pollution or speed restrictions in relation to the A21 upgrade between Hurst Green and Flimwell. The results of the Public Consultation indicated 14 respondents preferred a dual carriageway option to a three-lane road.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the financing of road improvements and proposed upgrades along the A21 in East Sussex. [20434]

Dr. Ladyman: There has been no change in current financing plans for A21 improvements schemes in East Sussex. However, as the A21 is a trunk road of regional importance, planned expenditure on major improvements falls within the scope of the regional advice that the Government have asked for on spending priorities for housing, transport and economic development.

The joint Treasury/DTI/DfT/ODPM document, "Regional Funding Allocations—Guidance on Preparing Advice", published in July 2005, included indicative annual spending guidelines for each of the three spending areas. We look forward to receiving regional advice by the end of January 2006.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received opposing the proposed A21 upgrade between Flimwell and Hurst Green. [20435]

Dr. Ladyman: A joint public consultation exercise was held for the A21 Flimwell and Hurst Green and A21 Kippings Cross to Lamberhurst upgrades. Of the 1,246 responses received to the combined consultation, 175 respondents opposed the upgrades. Since announcing the Preferred Route for the A21 Flimwell to Hurst Green improvement in February this year, we have received further representations from property owners expressing concern about the possible affects of the scheme on their properties.

M25

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the cost of widening the M25 between junctions 23 and 31; and if he will make a statement. [20103]

Dr. Ladyman: The cost of widening the M25 between junctions 23 and 30 is currently estimated at £908 million. At present there are no proposals to widen to Junction 31.

Search and Rescue

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will discuss with the Chancellor of the Exchequer implementation of the eleventh recommendation of the Eighth Report from the Transport Services Committee of Session 2004–05 on Search and Rescue (HC 322–1); and if he will make a statement. [20287]

Dr. Ladyman: In the Government Response to the Transport Select Committee (memorandum issued on 10 October 2005) we have made clear that we will work with charities to improve the VAT system where possible but we do not agree that a funding scheme for charities based on irrecoverable VAT is a practical or affordable way of targeting the Government support available for charities.

I understand that my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has conducted two major reviews to see if an efficient, affordable and principled solution could be found. These reviews came to two conclusions: first, that it would not be an affordable or efficient use of public resources to reimburse all 250,000 charitable bodies in the UK for the VAT they incur, regardless of the activities they are involved in or their financial health; and second, that there was no fair and principled basis to be used to decide which charities would be reimbursed their VAT and which would not.

Speed Restrictions

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the local authorities which *(a)* have and *(b)* have not introduced a 30 miles per hour speed restriction in villages. [20164]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not held centrally. Local highway authorities are tasked with setting local speed limits on all roads which fall within their area of responsibility. There is no requirement for them to notify the Department when a speed limit is changed.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the local authorities in England which *(a)* have and *(b)* have not implemented a 20 miles per hour speed restriction outside schools. [20165]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not held centrally. Local highway authorities are tasked with setting local speed limits on all roads which fall within their area of responsibility. There is no requirement for them to notify the Department when a speed limit is changed.

Transport Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will make a statement on the operation of section 70 of the Transport Act 1982; [20099]

(2) how many payments were made in each category of section 70 of the Transport Act 1982 in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* England and Wales in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [20104]

Dr. Ladyman: The seat belt wearing regulations provide for exemptions on medical grounds. To be exempt, a person must hold a valid certificate issued by a doctor. Doctors judge each case on its merits and grant a certificate of exemption as appropriate, making an examination where needed.

Section 70 of the Transport Act 1982, as amended, provides for financial assistance for certain classes of people in respect of an examination for the purpose of determining whether a certificate should be issued. On valid application, the Department can provide a maximum of £55.50 towards the cost of each examination. Those entitled to apply are those receiving benefits—the list in section 70 has been updated so that it now includes income support, pension credit (guarantee credit element), tax credit, disability working allowance, attendance allowance, Constant attendance allowance with war pension, constant attendance allowance with industrial injuries disablement pension, war pensioners mobility supplement, disability living allowance. For recipients of income support, pension credit (guarantee credit element), tax credit or a disability working allowance, a member of their household (for example wife, husband, son, daughter, etc.) is entitled to a free examination provided that they live at the same address and do not have their own source of income.

Statistics are not maintained on the type, or types of benefit that patients receive—and therefore figures cannot be allocated against benefit types. Since April 2000, the Department has paid 17 claims amounting to £971.50 as follows.

	Number of claims		
Financial year	*Essex*	*England and Wales*	*Total paid (£)*
2000–01	0	3	166.50
2001–02	1	3	146
2002–03	1	3	221.50
2003–04	1	4	216
2004–05	0	4	221.50

Travel Concessions (East Sussex)

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on bus travel concessions in the East Sussex rural area. [19623]

Ms Buck: From April 2006, people aged 60 and over and disabled people will be guaranteed free off-peak bus travel within their local authority boundary. Local authorities will retain their discretion to work together to provide a county-wide concessionary travel scheme as currently exists in East Sussex.

TREASURY

Alcohol/Tobacco Deaths

Mike Wood: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in how many deaths in *(a)* England, *(b)* West Yorkshire and *(c)* Batley and Spen (i) consumption of alcohol and (ii) smoking was the main cause in the last year for which figures are available. [19659]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Mike Wood, dated 21 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking in how many deaths in *(a)* England, *(b)* West Yorkshire and *(c)* Batley and Spen (i) consumption of alcohol and (ii) smoking was the main cause in the last year for which figures are available. (19659)

The most recently available information for mortality is deaths registered in 2004. Table 1 below shows numbers of deaths among residents of England, West Yorkshire, and Batley and Spen Parliamentary Constituency, where the underlying cause of death indicated a condition directly related to alcohol use in 2004.

Smoking history is rarely recorded on death certificates. Estimates can however be made of the number of deaths attributable to smoking, by using information on the contribution that smoking makes to specific conditions recorded at death. The most recent estimates for England were published by the Health Development Agency in 2004.[1] This report estimated that over the period 1998–2002 an average of 86,500 deaths were caused by smoking each year in England. The equivalent figure for West Yorkshire was 3,900 deaths. Estimates were not published at parliamentary constituency level. However the percentage of all deaths from causes attributable to smoking, at ages 35 and over, were published for Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs). These figures for West Yorkshire and its constituent PCTs are provided in Table 2 below. Batley and Spen Parliamentary Constituency is part of North Kirklees PCT.

Reference:

[1] Twigg L, Moon G and Walker S. The smoking epidemic in England. Health Development Agency, 2004.

Table 1: Alcohol-related deaths[1] to usual residents of England, West Yorkshire, and Batley and Spen parliamentary constituency, registered 2004

Area of residence	*Number of deaths*
England	6,125
West Yorkshire	303
Batley and Spen	13

[1] The cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10).
The codes used by ONS to define alcohol-related deaths are listed as follows:
F10—Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol
I42.6—Alcoholic cardiomyopathy
K70—Alcoholic liver disease
K73—Chronic hepatitis, not elsewhere classified
K74—Fibrosis and cirrhosis of liver
X45—Accidental poisoning by and exposure to alcohol
Notes:
1. Deaths were selected using the original underlying cause.
2. The selection of codes to define alcohol-related deaths is described in:
Baker A and Rooney C (2003). Recent trends in alcohol-related mortality, and the impact of ICD-10 on the monitoring of these deaths in England and Wales. "Health Statistics Quarterly" 17, pp 5–14.

Table 2: Estimated percentages of all deaths associated with smoking for ages 35 and over, by primary care trusts in West Yorkshire, 1998–2002

Primary Care Trust	*Percentage*
Airedale	30
Bradford City	34
Bradford South and West	36
North Bradford	33
Eastern Wakefield	37
Wakefield West	33
Leeds West	36
Leeds North East	26
East Leeds	38
South Leeds	37
Leeds North West	32
Calderdale	31
North Kirklees	32
Huddersfield Central	31
South Huddersfield	28
Strategic Health Authority	
West Yorkshire	33

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in how many deaths alcohol was the primary cause in the last five years in Lancaster and Wyre constituency. [20480]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Ben Wallace, dated 21 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many deaths where alcohol was the primary cause there were in the last five years in Lancaster and Wyre constituency. (20480)

The latest year for which figures are available is 2004. The attached table shows the numbers of deaths among residents of Lancaster and Wyre Parliamentary Constituency where the underlying cause of death indicated a condition directly related to alcohol use in the years 2000 to 2004.

Alcohol-related deaths[1] to usual residents of Lancaster and Wyre parliamentary constituency, registered 2000–04

	Number
2000	15
2001	2
2002	9
2003	8
2004	13

[1] For the year 2000 the cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9). The codes used by ONS to define alcohol-related deaths are as listed:
291—Alcoholic psychoses
303—Alcohol dependence syndrome
305.0—Non-dependent abuse of alcohol
425.5—Alcoholic cardiomyopathy
571—Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis
E860—Accidental poisoning by alcohol.
For the years 2001–04 the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) was used. To maintain comparability with earlier years the following codes were used:
F10—Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol
142.6—Alcoholic cardiomyopathy
K70—Alcoholic liver disease

K73—Chronic hepatitis, not elsewhere classified
K74—Fibrosis and cirrhosis of liver
X45—Accidental poisoning by and exposure to alcohol
Notes:
1. Deaths were selected using the original underlying cause.
2. The selection of codes to define alcohol-related deaths is described in "Baker A and Rooney C" (2003). Recent trends in alcohol-related mortality, and the impact of ICD-10 on the monitoring of these deaths in England and Wales. Health Statistics Quarterly 17, pp 5–14.

Cancer Survival Rates

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the survival rates of cancer patients one year after diagnosis were in England in each of the last five years. [19908]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Owen Paterson, dated 21 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning what were the survival rates of cancer patients one year after diagnosis in England in each of the last five years. (19908)

Cancer survival rates are only produced for specific cancers and are calculated by combining several years of diagnosis.

The latest available one-year and five-year survival rates for 21 common cancers (about 90 per cent. of all cancer cases) in England are for adult patients (aged 15–99 years) diagnosed during 1998–2001 and followed up to the end of 2003. These figures were published on the National Statistics website on 9 May 2005, and are available at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=14007

The latest available one-year and five-year survival rates for 23 less common cancers in England and Wales are for adult patients diagnosed during 1996–99 and followed up to the end of 2001. These figures were published on the National Statistics website on 2 March 2005, and are available at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=136134&More=n

In addition, one-year and five-year survival rates by government office region and strategic health authority, for eight common cancers, for adult patients diagnosed during 1995–97 and followed up to the end of 2002, were published on the National Statistics website on 21 April 2005, and are available at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/ssdatasetasp?vlnk=8974

Climate Change Levy

Mike Penning: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the impact of the Climate Change Levy; and if he will make a statement. [20429]

John Healey: The Government published an independent evaluation of the Climate Change levy (CCL), "Modelling the Initial Effects of the Climate Change Levy", by Cambridge Econometrics at Budget 2005, which is available at:

www.hmrc.gov.uk

The evaluation concluded that CCL is expected to deliver carbon dioxide savings of over 3.5 million tonnes of carbon by 2010, well above the estimates made at the time of the levy's introduction.

Departmental NDPBs

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will list those of his Department's advisory non-departmental public bodies which the Government are required *(a)* to consult prior to legislative proposals and *(b)* to publish advice from; [20135]

(2) which of the advisory non-departmental public bodies sponsored by his Department have a statutory base; which *(a)* publish their advice to Government, *(b)* publish an annual report and *(c)* lay an annual report before Parliament; and whether it is under a statutory requirement in each case; [20136]

(3) which of the advisory non-departmental public bodies sponsored by his Department *(a)* hold public meetings, *(b)* conduct public consultation exercises, *(c)* conduct consultation exercises with outside commercial interests, *(d)* publish a register of members' interests, *(e)* publish agendas for meetings and *(f)* publish the minutes of meetings; and whether it is under a statutory requirement in each case. [20137]

John Healey: The Treasury consults a wide range of interest bodies, as appropriate, in the process of preparing its legislative proposals. Depending on the nature of the consultation, responses are normally made public, subject to any confidentiality considerations and the wishes of respondents.

Details relating to the Treasury's two advisory non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs)—the Statistics Commission and the Public Services Productivity Panel—are set out in the annual Cabinet Office publication "Public Bodies", which can be accessed via: http://www.knowledgenetwork.gov.uk/ndpb/ndpb.nsf/0/04801FA2F8BF454480256E540049FF84?Open Document

The Statistics Commission:

The Statistics Commission was set up under the Framework for National Statistics in June 2000. It is a non-statutory body. It is independent of Ministers and the producers of National Statistics. Commissioners are appointed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in accordance with the Code of Practice published by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. The Commission is chaired by Professor David Rhind.

Under the Commission's Financial Memorandum it is required to lay an annual report and audited accounts as a single document before Parliament.

Under the Framework the Commission has a duty to be open and transparent about everything it does. Minutes and agendas of its meetings, correspondence and evidence it receives and advice it gives are all published on the Commission's website at www.statscom.org.uk. The commission also holds an open meeting once a year which is open to the public. A register of interests for commissioners is maintained on the commission's website. The commission consults widely in conducting its research.

Public Services Productivity Panel:

The Public Services Productivity Panel (PSPP) was established as part of the November 1998 pre-Budget report. The panel does not produce an annual report, but it has published a number of reports around themes

of public services productivity, which are accessible via the Treasury's website: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/documents/public_spending_and_services/public_services_productivity_panel/pss_psp_bckgrd.cfm

The PSPP does not hold public meetings, and meeting agendas and minutes are not published. It consults as appropriate in the course of carrying out its work.

Upon appointment, all PSPP members are expected to declare any personal or business interest which may, or may be perceived (by a reasonable member of the public) to influence their judgment. A register of such interests is kept up to date by the secretary to the panel and can be accessed via: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/Documents/Public_Spending_and_Services/Public_Services_productivity_Panel/pss_psp_register.cfm

Departmental Spending

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of Government expenditure has been allocated to each Government department, in each year from 1997; and what the outturn percentage of total spending for each Department was in each year. [20581]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Details of Government expenditure are published annually in the Public Expenditure Statistical Analysis. This publication, which is available in the Library of the House, includes a breakdown by Department of both planned and outturn expenditure.

Employment Levels

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* public and *(b)* private sector employment levels were on 1 January of each year since 2000; and what estimate he has made of private sector employment generated directly by work for the public sector in each year. [17665]

John Healey: Data on public and private employment levels since 2000 can be found in Table 5 of the National Statistics quarterly publication, "Public Sector Employment First Release", published on the ONS website.

There are no reliable estimates of private sector employment generated by public sector because surveys of departments ask for information on employment levels but not on employment by private sector firms under their remits. Similarly, data on public and private sector employment published by the Labour Force Survey ask respondents to classify themselves as working in the public sector or private sector but does not ask whether they are working for private firms in the public sector.

Endowment Mis-selling

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials last met the Financial Services Authority to discuss compensation for those who were mis-sold endowment policies. [20039]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Treasury has regular discussions with the FSA covering a range of matters.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the advice the Financial Services Authority offers those wanting to pursue a claim for the mis-selling of endowment mortgages. [20040]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Financial Services Authority (FSA) factsheet "Endowment mortgage complaints" has been produced and distributed since October 2000 and has been regularly updated. The FSA also produces a more detailed guide to making a complaint, which includes an example of how to write a complaint letter. Consumer awareness campaigns have backed this up.

Millions of the FSA's mortgage endowment fact sheets have been distributed by firms or requested by consumers. And the consumer communications campaign has resulted in high levels of awareness as evidenced in the FSA's 2002 Consumer Research (Paper 16) where 99 per cent. of consumers recalled receiving re-projection letters, enclosing FSA fact sheets.

FSA's latest research results (published in July 2005) indicate that 48 per cent. of households facing a shortfall have restructured their mortgage, savings or endowment. And around 21 per cent. of those facing a shortfall have complained or taken advice. FSA records show that at the end of 2004 around £1.1 billion had been paid in redress.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the way compensation for the mis-selling of endowment mortgages is calculated. [20041]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The FSA has consulted on the Mortgage Endowment Complaints Guidance set out in its Rulebook. This was issued in 2001. The FSA wrote to firms in 2002 and December 2004 to remind firms of their requirement to deal with mortgage endowment complaints fairly and consistently. The FSA has also produced a factsheet on compensation for consumers, which we understand firms are starting to send out with their final response letters.

Family Statistics

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of children lived in *(a)* single parent families and *(b)* two parent families where the parents were married, in each year since 1976; and if he will make a statement. [20020]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. David Laws, dated 21 October 2005:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question on the proportion of dependent children living in *(a)* lone parent families and *(b)* married couple families since 1976. (20020)

Estimates of the percentage of dependent children living in Britain by different family types of the years available are shown in the attached table.

Proportion of dependent children[1] by family type, United Kingdom

Percentage

	Married couple family	*Cohabiting couple family*	*Lone parent family*
1977[2]	90		10
1986	85	2	13
1992	79	5	16
1993	78	6	16
1994	76	6	18
1995	75	7	19
1996	72	7	21
1997	72	8	21
1998	70	8	22
1999	69	9	22
2000	69	9	22
2001	68	10	22
2002	67	10	23
2003	66	10	23
2004	66	11	23
2005	65	11	24

[1] Dependent children are those aged under 16 or aged 16 to 18 who are never-married and in full-time education.

[2] Split of married and cohabiting couples not available. Figures for 1976 are not available.

Note:

percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

Sources:

Pre 1992 General Household Survey (Great Britain), 1992–2005 Labour Force Survey (United Kingdom)

Fires

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many fatalities were attributed to fires in each year since 1997. [20664]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Paul Burstow, dated 21 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning how many fatalities were attributed to fires for each year since 1997. (20664)

The most recently available information is for deaths in 2003. Figures for deaths due to exposure to smoke, fire or flames are shown in the table below for each year from 1997 to 2003.

Number of deaths due to exposure to smoke, fire or flames[1] persons, England and Wales, 1997 to 2003[2]

	Number of deaths
1997	539
1998	470
1999	421
2000	453
2001	442
2002	432
2003	449

[1] Cause of death was defined using the codes below from the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9)for the years 1997 and 2000, and Tenth Revision (ICD-10)from 2001 onwards. ICD-9—E890-E899, E958.1, E968.0, E988.1 ICD-10-XOO-X09, X76, X97, Y26. Includes deaths given a verdict of accident, assault, suicide or undetermined intent.

[2] Figures are for deaths occurring in each calendar year.

Futurebuilders

Tim Loughton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how much has been paid out through Futurebuilders to date; [18835]

(2) which organisations have received funding from Futurebuilders; [18836]

(3) what proportion of Futurebuilders funding to date has been allocated to hospices. [18837]

Paul Goggins: I have been asked to reply.

The total sum disbursed to date is £4.25million. The following list details the organisations who have had Futurebuilders investments agreed. To date no hospices have received funding from Futurebuilders.

List of organisations that have successfully secured Futurebuilders investments: as of October 2005

Full investments

African Refugee Community Health and Research Organisation (ARCHRO)
Bangladeshi Parents and Carers Association
Brain and Spinal Injury Charity (BASIC)
Bickersplatts Children's Centre
Birmingham Institute for the Deaf
Bridge Project, The
Broadreach House
Camden Society, The
Catz Club
Community Action Project
Cottingley Cornerstone Centre
Croxteth Community Trust
Derwent Stepping Stones
East Midlands Community Dental Association
Education Business Connections Ltd.
Equinox
Get Well UK
Leeds Community Mediation Service
Liverpool Crossroads Caring for Carers
North Liverpool Citizen's Advice Bureau
PeaceMaker
Pecan
Queen Alexandra Cottage Homes
Russian Orthodox Women's Drug Project
Sheffield Rebuild
Sound Base Studios Trust
Thirsk Clock
Wings South West
The Who Cares? Trust
Yemeni Economic and Training Centre (YETC)

Development grants

Albanian Youth Action
All Saints Community Devl Association
Ariel Trust
Bangladeshi Youth and Cultural Shomiti
Cambridge Independent Advice Centre
Chiltern Centre for Disabled Children
Chinese Healthy Living Centre
Connect Community Transport
East Berkshire Mind

Enfield Asian Welfare Association
Foundations UK
Free at Last
Harrogate District Community Transport
Headway Dorset
Kaleidoscope in Action
Learning Disabilities Federation (North Tyneside)
Love and Joy Ministry
MED Theatre
NOAH Enterprise
Options for Life
OTR—BANES
OURS
Pie Factory Music
Preset Charitable Trust
Rochdale Connections Trust
Sector Services
Sefton Carers Centre
Sickle Cell Advice Bureau
Stoke Community Culture Group
Turkish Cypriot Women's Project
Unite Ltd.
Urban Voice (UK) Ltd.
Woman's Trust

Gift Aid

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the reasons are for the introduction of new arrangements for the operation of Gift Aid on admissions; [20600]

(2) if he will publish the research that provided the basis for the change in existing Gift Aid arrangements; and what abuses were exposed; [20601]

(3) what consultation his Department undertook with smaller charities before it entered into the changes proposed in detailed guidance for the new Gift Aid Rule, with specific reference to the impact on Friends organisations. [20602]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answers the former Economic Secretary (John Healey) gave to the hon. Member for Edinburgh, West (John Barrett) on 30 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1352W, 23 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 686W, 8 June 2004, Official Report, column 371W, and 14 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1507W.

The Inland Revenue held three periods of consultation on the changes. As part of this consultation the Inland Revenue wrote to 84 charitable organisations, both large and small, and 34 other interested organisations, including representative bodies, who had expressed an interest. It also held a number of meetings around the country to discuss the changes face-to-face. These meetings covered all organisations across the charitable sector likely to be affected by the changes.

The new rules come into effect on 6 April 2006 and detailed guidance has been drawn up in consultation with the sector and is available on the HM Revenue and Customs website at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/charities/chapter3-insert.htm.

HM Revenue and Customs is subject to a strict duty of confidentiality in relation to information it obtains in performance of its duties. This prevents the publication of abuses uncovered.

Grandparents

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he is taking to help support grandparents who act as foster parents, guardians or holders of a residence order for their grandchildren; and if he will make a statement. [19743]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Child tax credit and child benefit can both be paid to grandparents where they are responsible for their grandchildren.

Gun Smuggling

David Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he is taking to tackle the smuggling of guns and gun components. [19492]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Gentlemen to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Romford (Andrew Rosindell) on 4 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 87W.

Illegal Drug Deaths

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many deaths have been caused in Gravesham by illegal drugs since 1997. [20037]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Adam Holloway, dated 21 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many deaths have been caused in Gravesham by illegal drugs since 1997. (20037)

Relevant figures are only readily available for deaths where the underlying cause was related to drug poisoning. It is not possible to identify from death certificates which substance was the primary cause when more than one was involved.

There were fewer than five deaths in Gravesham Local Authority involving drug misuse in all but one of the years 1997 to 2003. In order to maintain confidentiality of information supplied to the Office for National Statistics by coroners for statistical purposes only, precise numbers cannot be provided for individual years. These data have, therefore, been provided for rolling five-year periods.

Deaths from drug-related poisoning[1] involving illegal substances,[2] in Gravesham,[3] deaths occurring 1997–2001, 1998–2002, and 1999–2003.

Rolling five-year period	*Number of deaths*
1997–2001	12
1998–2002	13
1999–2003	12

[1] Cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes 292, 304, 305.2–305.9, E850-E858, E950.0-E950.5, E962.0 and E980.0-E980.5 for 1997 to 2000, and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes F11-F16, F18-F19, X40-X44, X60-X64, X85 and Y10- Y14from 2001 onwards.
[2] Includes deaths where the underlying cause was mental and behavioural disorders due to psychoactive substance use and other drug-related poisoning deaths where a drug controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 was mentioned on the death record.
[3] Usual residents of Gravesham Local Authority.

Local Authority Staff Numbers

David Mundell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people worked in *(a)* the public sector and *(b)* the private sector in each local authority area in each of the last six years, broken down by industry. [19480]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. David Mundell, dated 21 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about public and private sector employment. (19480)

The Office for National Statistics publishes a quarterly public sector employment first release that contains UK data and includes an industry breakdown for the public sector. The most recent estimates for Q2 2005 were published on 30 September 2005.

Estimates of the number of people working in the public and private sector at the local authority level are not available. However, on 28th October ONS will be publishing estimates of the proportion of employment in each region of the UK which is in the public sector.

Figures for all in employment for each local authority are available from the Annual Population Survey (APS) and published on ONS' Nomis website at: www.nomisweb.co.uk

Management Consultancies

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which five management consultancies received the highest value of contracts awarded by his Department in each of the last three years; and what the total value was of the contracts awarded to each. [12585]

John Healey: The information is available on the Treasury website at http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/about/information/foi_disclosures/foi_disclosures index.cfm.

Motor Fuel (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people have been *(a)* prosecuted and *(b)* fined in connection with an offence directly relating to the illegal use of petrol or diesel in a motor vehicle in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [19459]

John Healey: The number of convictions secured which are related to hydrocarbon oils fraud during the last four years are as set out in the following table:

	Number of convictions
2000–01	5
2001–02	15
2002–03	3
2003–04	4

HMRC do not have figures for prosecutions resulting from all forms of revenue evasion in road fuels for years prior to 2000–01. Figures for 2004–2005 will be published in HMRC's Annual Report 2004–05.

The number of Civil Penalties, which relate to vehicles seized in relation to illegal fuel use, for the last four years are set out in the following table:

	Number of Civil Penalties relating to vehicles seized
2000–01	243
2001–02	714
2002–03	1,102
2003–04	901

HMRC do not have figures for Civil Penalties resulting from all forms of revenue evasion in road fuels for years prior to 2000–01.

Planning Gain Supplement

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he expects the Government's plan for a planning gain supplement to be revenue-neutral. [19714]

John Healey: As set out in the March 2005 Economic and Fiscal Strategy Report, the Government will respond to the recommendations in the Barker Review of Housing Supply later this year.

Search and Rescue

Mr. Gale: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the eleventh recommendation of the Eighth Report of the Transport Select Committee of Session 2004–05 on Search and Rescue (HC 322–1); and if he will make a statement. [20288]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 19 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 1107W, to the hon. Member for Dumfriesshire, Clydesdale and Tweeddale (David Mundell).

Skin Cancer

Mrs. James: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many cases of skin cancer were diagnosed in England in the last three years for which figures are available. [20811]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunn to Ms Sian James, dated 21 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning how many cases of skin cancer were diagnosed in England in the last three years for which figures are available. (20811)

The latest available figures for the incidence of melanoma skin cancer are for the year 2003. Numbers of cases by sex for the years 2001 to 2003 are given in the table below.

Number of newly diagnosed cases of melanoma skin cancer[1] in England, by sex, 2001–2003

	Number of cases		
	Male	*Female*	*Total*
2001	2,638	3,424	6,062
2002	2,832	3,584	6,416
2003	2,971	3,718	6,689

[1] Melanoma skin cancer is defined as code C43 in the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD10).

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Stationery

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will list the Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports; and what the (i) name and (ii) recycled and post-consumer recycled content of each paper is; [15804]

(2) by what date his Department expects to implement in full the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste; [15806]

(3) what percentage of *(a)* paper for printed publications and *(b)* copying paper used by the Department in (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [15807]

John Healey: The main stationery suppliers for the Treasury and HM Revenue and Customs are set out in the following table.

Product	*Main supplier*	*(i) Name*	*(ii) Recycled and post-consumer content*
(a) Copier paper	Banner Business Supplies Ltd.	Evolve and Steinbeis	100 per cent. recycled with 100 per cent. post-consumer waste
(b) Stationery	Banner Business Supplies Ltd.	Various differing products	Varies by product
(c) Envelopes	Banner Business Supplies Ltd.	Various differing products	Varies by product
(d) Paper for reports: HMRC	Banner Business Supplies Ltd.	Various differing products	No information available
(d) Paper for reports: Treasury	Robert Horne	Revive	75 per cent. recycled of which all post-consumer waste

Both HM Treasury and HM Revenue and Customs have already met the Defra quick win target for copying paper. They use Evolve and Steinbeis recycled paper supplied by Banner, which is 100 per cent. recycled and 100 per cent. post consumer waste.

HM Treasury aims to use Revive recycled paper (75 per cent. of which is made from 100 per cent. de-inked post-consumer waste) for all printed publications, and in 2004–05 approximately 65 per cent. of paper used in the Treasury's printed publications was Revive. Where Revive is not suitable, Crossbow is used. Crossbow contains a minimum of 20 per cent. recycled fibre. HM Treasury is working to further increase the recycled and post consumer waste content of its printed publications.

HM Revenue and Customs have incorporated the Quick Win targets into their procurement policy and guidance and are moving forward in terms of printed publications. All of their contracts for printed publications make provision for the use of recycled paper or materials obtained from sustainable sources. They are liaising with other Government Departments to make the most effective use of contracts for recycled paper and working closely with their print suppliers and output handling teams to ensure that the move to recycled content does not impact on their ability to dispatch and process printed products. As part of their continuing review and corporate re-branding work they are also beginning to look at transferring project work areas such as the 2006 Employers Pack and P2 stationery to recycled content in line with the Quick Win target.

HMRC and HMT are also developing a Sustainable Procurement Strategy which both HMT and HMRC will follow and which will form part of both Departments' new Sustainable Development Action Plan. HMT and HMRC's policy is to ensure paper is used economically and that recycled paper is used wherever it is practical and economic to do so.

The available figures for past use of recycled paper are in the following table:

Product/Department	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Paper for printed publications		
HM Treasury	Information not held	Approximately 65 per cent. of paper used was Revive (75 per cent. of which is made from 100 per cent. post consumer waste). The remainder was Crossbow (20 per cent. of which is recycled)

Product/Department	2003–04	2004–05
HM Revenue and Customs	1.3 per cent. from recycled sources	18.5 per cent. from recycled sources
Copying paper		
HM Treasury	56 per cent. was recycled, containing 100 per cent. post consumer waste	97 per cent. was recycled, containing 100 per cent. post consumer waste
HM Revenue and Customs	88 per cent. was recycled, containing 100 per cent. post consumer waste	98 per cent. was recycled, containing 100 per cent. post consumer waste

Wages

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* average wage and *(b)* median wage for (i) men and (ii) women has been in each year since 2001 in (A) Northern Ireland and (B) England. [19417]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell to Mr. Peter Robinson, dated 21 October 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question what the *(a)* average wage and *(b)* median wage for (i) men and (ii) women has been in each year since 2001 in (A) Northern Ireland and (B) England. (19417)

Currently average earnings are estimated from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), and are provided for full time employees on adult rates of pay whose pay was unaffected by absence during the pay period. This is the standard definition used for ASHE. The ASHE does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

I attach a table showing the Average Gross Weekly Earnings for full time males and females in each year since 2001 for both England and Northern Ireland.

The ASHE, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the United Kingdom. It is a one per cent sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes.

Gross weekly pay for full-time employee jobs[1]

£

	Male		Female	
	England	Northern Ireland	England	Northern Ireland
Mean				
2001	509	419	373	324
2002	534	432	394	342
2003	551	448	407	356
2004[2]	569	464	427	382
Median				
2001	422	362	319	290
2002	437	371	336	300
2003	452	382	346	309
2004[2]	470	402	363	335

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.

[2] 2004 including supplementary surveys designed to improve the coverage of ASHE.

Source:
Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, ONS.

VAT

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the likely impact on *(a)* jobs and *(b)* the economy in the UK of the proposal to charge VAT on insurance-related services. [20418]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) issued a consultation document on the proposed changes to the VAT exemption for insurance-related services in July, inviting comment from all interested parties. As part of the consultation, views were sought on the impact the changes were likely to have on UK industry and policyholders.

The consultation exercise formally closed on 30 September and HMRC are currently evaluating the responses.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Winter Fuel Payment

David Mundell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will change the practice by which the winter fuel payment rebate is paid only to those whose birthday falls before September in the relevant year. [19434]

Mr. Timms: The qualifying week for winter fuel payments is the week commencing with the third Monday in September. This allows for the necessary checks to be carried out and for the majority of payments to be made automatically by Christmas fulfilling the commitment made by the Chancellor. There are no plans to change this practice.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will extend the winter fuel payment scheme to disabled people under the age of 65; and if he will make a statement. [20295]

Mr. Timms: Help is already available through the disability benefits and the disability premium in income support in recognition of the extra costs, including heating, which disabled people have. There are no plans to extend the winter fuel payment scheme to disabled people under age 65.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will raise winter fuel payments in line with recent energy price increases. [19751]

Mr. Timms: We have no plans to do so. The payment has risen from £20 in winter 1997–98 to £200 from winter 2000–01. It is a significant contribution towards fuel costs.